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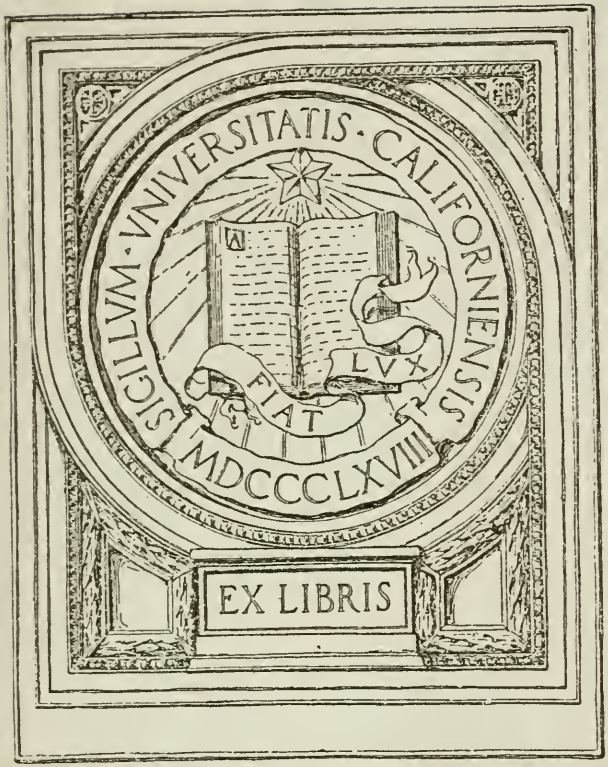
MAYNE REID

A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.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MAYNE REID:

A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.

Mayne Reid

MAYNE REID

A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE

BY

ELIZABETH REID

HIS WIDOW.

WARD AND DOWNEY,

12, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.

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TO

CHARLES OLLIVANT,

IN TOKEN OF

HIS DEVOTION TO

MAYNE REID.

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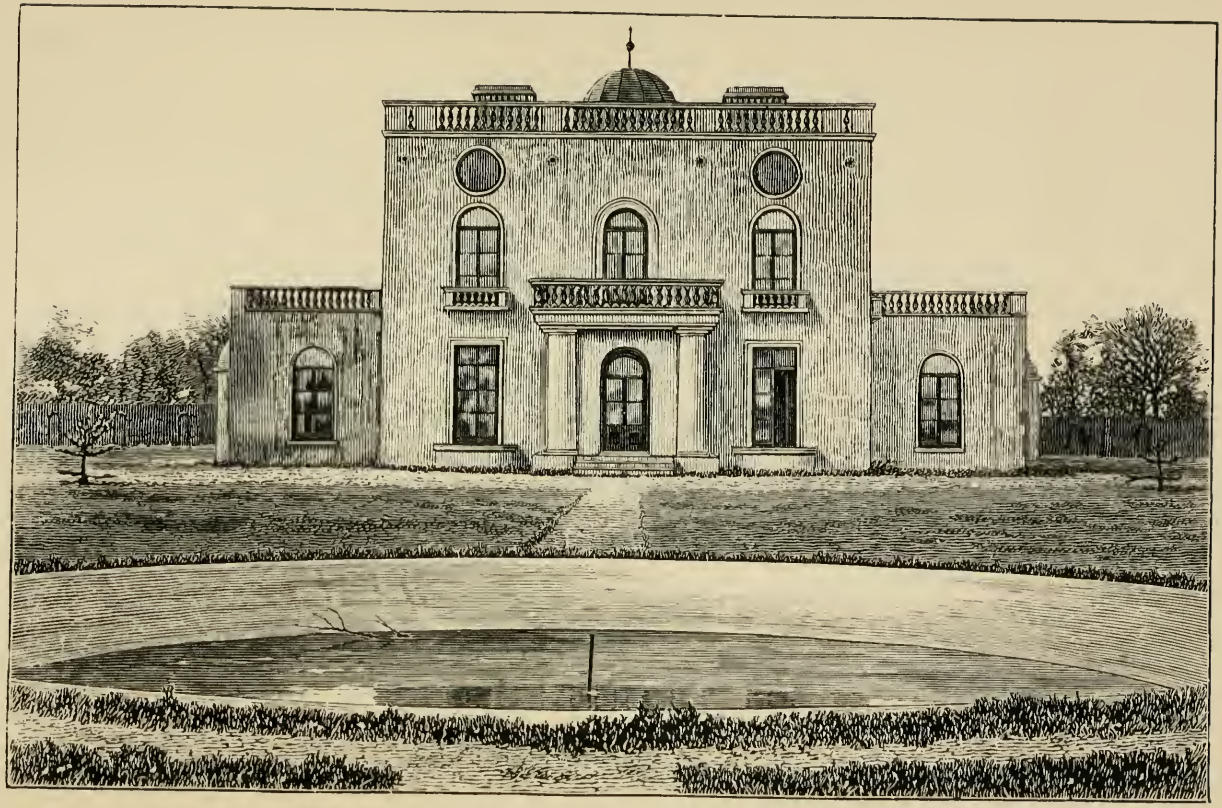

Captain Mayne Reid's "Hacienda," Gerrard's Cross, Bucks.

MEMOIR OF MAYNE REID.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE. EMIGRATION TO AMERICA. EDGAR ALLEN POE.

To most of the world, Captain Mayne Reid is known only as a writer of thrilling romances and works on natural history. It will appear in these pages that he was also distinguished as a man of action and a soldier, and the record of his many gallant deeds should still further endear him to the hearts of his readers.

He was born in the north of Ireland, in April, 1818, at Ballyroney, co. Down, the eldest son of the Rev. Thomas Mayne Reid, Presbyterian minister, a man of great

learning and ability. His mother was the daughter of the Rev. Samuel Rutherford, a descendant of the "hot and hasty Rutherford" mentioned in Sir Walter Scott's "Marmion."

One of Mayne Reid's frequent expressions was: "I have all the talent of the Reids and all the deviltry of the Rutherfords." He certainly may be said to have inherited at least the "hot and hasty temper" of his mother's family, for his father, the Rev. Thomas Mayne Reid, was of a most placid disposition, much beloved by his parishioners, and a favourite alike with Catholics and Protestants. It used to be said of him by the peasantry, "Mr. Reid is so polite he would bow to the ducks."

Several daughters had been born to them before the advent of their first son. He was christened Thomas Mayne, but in

after life dropped the Thomas, and was known only as Mayne Reid. Other sons and daughters followed, but Mayne was the only one destined to figure in the world's history.

Young Mayne Reid early evinced a taste for war. When a small boy he was often found running barefooted along the road after a drum and fife band, greatly to his mother's dismay. She chided him, saying, "What will the folks think to see Mr. Reid's son going about like this?" To which young Mayne replied, "I don't care. I'd rather be Mr. Drum than Mr. Reid."

It was the ardent wish of both parents that their eldest son should enter the Church; and, at the age of sixteen, Mayne Reid was sent to college to prepare for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, but after four years' study, it was

found that his inclinations were altogether opposed to this calling. He carried off prizes in mathematics, classics, and elocution; distinguished himself in all athletic sports; anything but theology. It is recorded, on one occasion when called upon to make a prayer, he utterly failed, breaking down at the first few sentences. It was called by his fellow-students "Reid's wee prayer."

Captain Mayne Reid has been heard to say, "My mother would rather have had me settle down as a minister, on a stipend of one hundred a year, than know me to be the most famous man in history."

The good mother could never understand her eldest son's ambition; but she was happy in seeing her second son, John, succeed his father as pastor of Closkilt, Drumgooland.

In the month of January, 1840, Mayne Reid first set foot in the new world—landing at New Orleans. We quote his own words: "Like other striplings escaped from college, I was no longer happy at home. The yearning for travel was upon me, and without a sigh I beheld the hills of my native land sink behind the black waves, not much caring whether I should ever see them again."

Soon after landing, he thus expressed himself, showing how little store he set upon his classical training as a stock-in-trade upon which to begin the battle of life: "And one of my earliest surprises—one that met me on the very threshold of my Transatlantic existence—was the discovery of my own utter uselessness. I could point to my desk and say, 'There lie the proofs of my erudition; the highest prizes

of my college class.' But of what use are they? The dry theories I had been taught had no application to the purposes of real life. My logic was the prattle of the parrot. My classic lore lay upon my mind like lumber; and I was altogether about as well prepared to struggle with life—to benefit either my fellow-men or myself—as if I had graduated in Chinese mnemonics. And, oh! ye pale professors, who drilled me in syntax and scansion, ye would deem me ungrateful indeed were I to give utterance to the contempt and indignation which I then felt for ye; then, when I looked back upon ten years of wasted existence spent under your tutelage; then, when, after believing myself an educated man, the illusion vanished, and I awoke to the knowledge that I knew nothing."

We shall not here follow Mayne Reid through the ever varying scenes of this period—his life in Louisiana, encounters on the prairies with buffaloes, grizzly bears, and Indians on the war-path with their trophies of scalps; his excursions with trappers and Indians up the Red River, the Missouri, and Platte—for all of these are embodied in his writings, which contain more reality than romance.

Mayne Reid tried his hand at various occupations, both in the civilized and uncivilized life of the new world.

For a brief space he was "storekeeper" and "nigger driver," then tutor in the family of Judge Peyton Robertson, of Tennessee. Soon tiring of this, he set up a school of his own in the neighbourhood, erecting a wooden building as school house, at his own expense. He was very popular as a teacher,

but hunting in the backwoods being more to his taste, he soon went in quest of fresh sport.

At Cincinnati, Ohio, by way of a change, he joined a company of strolling players, but very soon convinced himself that play-acting was not his *forte*. This little episode in his life, the gallant Captain was anxious to keep from the knowledge of his family in Ireland. They, strict Presbyterians as they were, looked upon play-actors as almost lost to the evil one. However, the fact got into print some years later.

Of all his varied adventures, the Captain would never tell us of his failure in this one line of business, though he would dwell on his talent as "storekeeper" and schoolmaster.

Between the years 1842 and 1846 we hear of him as a poet, newspaper correspondent and editor. In the autumn of 1842 Mayne

Reid had reached Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Here he contributed poetry to the *Pittsburgh Chronicle*, under the *nom de plume* of the "Poor Scholar." In the spring of 1843 he settled in Philadelphia, and devoted all his energies to literature, the most ambitious of his efforts being a poem, "La Cubana," published in "Godey's Magazine." Here he also produced a five-act tragedy, "Love's Martyr," which is full of dramatic power.

During Mayne Reid's residence in Philadelphia he made the acquaintance of the American poet, Edgar Allen Poe, and the following account of the poet's life, written by Mayne Reid some years later, in defence of his much maligned friend, is of interest.

"Nearly a quarter of a century ago, I knew a man named Edgar Allen Poe. I knew him as well as one man may know another, after an intimate and almost daily

association extending over a period of two years. He was then a reputed poet; I only an humble admirer of the Muses.

"But it is not of his poetic talent I here intend to speak. I never myself had a very exalted opinion of it—more especially as I knew that the poem upon which rests the head corner-stone of his fame is not the creation of Edgar Allen Poe, but of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. In 'Lady Geraldine's Courtship,' you will find the original of 'The Raven.' I mean the tune, the softly flowing measure, the imagery and a good many of the words—even to the 'rustling of the soft and silken curtain.'

"This does not seem like defending the dead poet, nor, *as a poet*, is his defence intended. I could do it better were I to speak of his prose, which for classic diction and keen analytic power has not been sur-

passed in the republic of letters. Neither to speak of his poetry, or his prose, have I taken up the pen; but of what is, in my opinion, of much more importance than either—his moral character. Contrary to my estimate, the world believes him to have been a great poet; and there are few who will question his transcendent talents as a writer of prose. But the world also believes him to have been a blackguard; and there are but few who seem to dissent from this doctrine.

"I am one of this few; and I shall give my reasons, drawing them from my own knowledge of the man. In attempting to rescue his maligned memory from the clutch of calumniators, I have no design to represent Edgar Allen Poe as a model of what man ought to be, either morally or socially. I desire to obtain for him only strict justice; and if this be accorded, I have no fear that

those according it will continue to regard him as the monster he has been hitherto depicted. Rather may it be that the hideous garment will be transferred from his to the shoulders of his hostile biographer.

"When I first became acquainted with Poe he was living in a suburban district of Philadelphia, called 'Spring Garden.' I have not been there for twenty years, and, for aught I know, it may now be in the centre of that progressive city. It was then a quiet residential neighbourhood, noted as the chosen quarter of the Quakers.

"Poe was no Quaker; but, I remember well, he was next-door neighbour to one. And in this wise: that while the wealthy co-religionist of William Penn dwelt in a splendid four-story house, built of the beautiful coral-coloured bricks for which Philadelphia is celebrated, the poet lived in a

lean-to of three rooms—there may have been a garret with a closet—of painted plank construction, supported against the gable of the more pretentious dwelling.

"If I remember aright, the Quaker was a dealer in cereals. He was also Poe's landlord; and, I think, rather looked down upon the poet—though not from any question of character, but simply from his being fool enough to figure as a scribbler and a poet.

"In this humble domicile I can say that I have spent some of the pleasantest hours of my life—certainly some of the most intellectual. They were passed in the company of the poet himself and his wife —a lady angelically beautiful in person and not less beautiful in spirit. No one who remembers that dark-eyed, dark-haired daughter of Virginia—her own

name, if I rightly remember—her grace, her facial beauty, her demeanour, so modest as to be remarkable—no one who has ever spent an hour in her company but will endorse what I have above said. I remember how we, the friends of the poet, used to talk of her high qualities. And when we talked of her beauty, I well knew that the rose-tint upon her cheek was too bright, too pure to be of earth. It was consumption's colour—that sadly-beautiful light which beckons to an early tomb.

"In the little lean-to, besides the poet and his interesting wife, there was but one other dweller. This was a woman of middle age, and almost masculine aspect. She had the size and figure of a man, with a countenance that, at first sight, seemed scarce feminine. A stranger would

have been incredulous—surprised, as I was—when introduced to her as the mother of that angelic creature who had accepted Edgar Poe as the partner of her life.

"Such was the relationship; and when you came to know this woman better, the masculinity of her person disappeared before the truly feminine nature of her mind; and you saw before you a type of those grand American mothers—such as existed in the days when block-houses had to be defended, bullets run in red-hot saucepans, and guns loaded for sons and husbands to fire them. Just such a woman was the mother-in-law of the poet Poe. If not called upon to defend her home and family against the assaults of the Indian savage, she was against that as ruthless, as implacable, and almost as

difficult to repel—poverty. She was the ever-vigilant guardian of the house, watching it against the silent but continuous sap of necessity, that appeared every day to be approaching closer and nearer. She was the sole servant, keeping everything clean; the sole messenger, doing the errands, making pilgrimages between the poet and his publishers, frequently bringing back such chilling responses as 'The article not accepted,' or, 'The cheque not to be given until such and such a day'—often too late for his necessities.

"And she was also messenger to the market; from it bringing back, not the 'delicacies of the season,' but only such commodities as were called for by the dire exigencies of hunger.

"And yet were there some delicacies. I shall never forget how, when peaches

were in season and cheap, a pottle of these, the choicest gifts of Pomona, were divested of their skins by the delicate fingers of the poet's wife, and left to the 'melting mood,' to be amalgamated with Spring Garden cream and crystallized sugar, and then set before such guests as came in by chance.

"Reader! I know you will acknowledge this to be a picture of tranquil domestic happiness; and I think you will believe me, when I tell you it is truthful. But I know also you will ask, 'What has it to do with the poet?' since it seems to reflect all the credit on his wife, and the woman who called him her son-in-law. For all yet said it may seem so; but I am now to say that which may give it a different aspect.

"During two years of intimate personal

association with Edgar Allan Poe, I found in him the following phases of character, accomplishment and disposition:

"First: I discovered rare genius; not at all of the poetic order, not even of the fanciful, but far more of a practical kind, shown in a power of analytic reasoning such as few men possess, and which would have made him the finest detective policeman in the world. Vidocq would have been a simpleton beside him.

"Secondly: I encountered a scholar of rare accomplishments—especially skilled in the lore of Northern Europe, and more imbued with it than with the southern and strictly classic. How he had drifted into this speciality I never knew. But he had it in a high degree, as is apparent throughout all his writings, some of which read like an echo of the Scandinavian 'Sagas.'

"Thirdly: I felt myself in communication with a man of original character, disputing many of the received doctrines and dogmas of the day; but only original in so far as to dispute them, altogether regardless of consequences to himself or the umbrage he gave to his adversaries.

"Fourthly: I saw before me a man to whom vulgar rumour had attributed those personal graces supposed to attract the admiration of women. This is the usual description given of him in biographical sketches. And why, I cannot tell, unless it has been done to round off a piquant paragraph. His was a face purely intellectual. Women might admire it, thinking of this; but it is doubtful if many of them ever fell, or could have fallen, in love with the man to whom it belonged. I don't think many ever did. It was

enough for one man to be beloved by one such woman as he had for his wife.

"Fifthly: I feel satisfied that Edgar Allan Poe was not, what his slanderers have represented him, a rake. I know he was not; but in truth the very opposite. I have been his companion in one or two of his wildest frolics, and can certify that they never went beyond the innocent mirth in which we all indulge when Bacchus gets the better of us. With him the jolly god sometimes played fantastic tricks—to the stealing away his brain, and sometimes, too, his hat—leaving him to walk bareheaded through the streets at an hour when the sun shone too clearly on his crown, then prematurely bald.

"While acknowledging this as one of Poe's failings, I can speak truly of its not being habitual; only occasional, and drawn

out by some accidental circumstance—now disappointment; now the concurrence of a social crowd, whose flattering friendship might lead to champagne, a single glass of which used to affect him so much that he was hardly any longer responsible for his actions, or the disposal of his hat.

"I have chronicled the poet's crimes, all that I ever knew him to be guilty of, and, indeed, all that can be honestly alleged against him; though many call him a monster. It is time to say a word of his virtues. I could expatiate upon these far beyond the space left me; or I might sum them up in a single sentence by saying that he was no worse and no better than most other men.

"I have known him to be for a whole month closeted in his own house—the little 'shanty' supported against the gable of the rich Quaker—all the time hard at work

with his pen, poorly paid, and hard driven to keep the wolf from his slightly-fastened door, intruded on only by a few select friends, who always found him, what they knew him to be, a generous host, an affectionate son-in-law and husband; in short, a respectable gentleman.

"In the list of literary men, there has been no such spiteful biographer as Dr. Rufus Griswold, and never such a victim of posthumous spite as poor Edgar Allan Poe."

Mayne Reid left Philadelphia in the spring of 1846, spending the summer at Newport, Rhode Island, as correspondent to the *New York Herald*, under the name of "Ecolier." In September of the same year he was in New York, and had secured a post on Wilkes' *Spirit of the Times*, but in November he abandoned the pen for the sword.

The following extract from a letter of

Mayne Reid to his father tells something of his life in Philadelphia:

"Headquarters, U. S. Army,

"City of Mexico,

"January 20th, 1848.

"Can I expect that my silence for several years will be pardoned? When I last wrote you I made a determination that our correspondence, on my side at least, should cease until I had made myself worthy of continuing that correspondence. Since then circumstances have enabled me to take rank among *men*—to prove myself not unworthy of that gentle blood from which I am sprung. Oh, how my heart beats at the renewal of those tender ties—paternal, fraternal, filial affection; those golden chains of the heart so long, so sadly broken.

"If I mistake not, my last letter to you

was written in the city of Pittsburgh. I was then on my way from the West to the cities of the Atlantic. Shortly after I reached Philadelphia, where for a while my wild wanderings ceased. In this city I devoted myself to literature, and for a period of two or three years earned a scanty but honourable subsistence with my pen. My genius, unfortunately for my purse, was not of that marketable class which prostitutes itself to the low literature of the day. My love for tame literature enabled me to remain poor—aye, even obscure, if you will—though I have the consolation of knowing that there are understandings, and those, too, of a high order, who believe that my capabilities in this field are not surpassed, if equalled, by any writer on this continent. This is the under-current of feeling regarding me in the United States ; the current, I am happy to

say, that runs in the minds of the educated and intelligent. Perhaps in some future day this under-current may break through the surface, and shine the brighter for having been so long concealed.

"But I have now neither time nor space for theories. Facts will please you better, my dear father and best friend. During my trials as a writer, my almost anonymous productions occasionally called forth warm eulogies from the press. A little gold rubbed into the palm of an editor would have made them wonders! During this time I made many friends, but none of that class who were able and willing to lift me from the sink of poverty.

"There are no Mæcenases in the United States. I found none to forge golden wings for me, that I might fly to the heights of Parnassus. During this probation I fre-

quently sent you papers and magazines, containing my productions, generally, I believe, under the *nom de plume* of 'The Poor Scholar.' Have these missiles ever reached you? As I have said, for three or four years I struggled on through this life of literature, and amid the charlatanism and quackery of the age I found I must descend to the everyday nothings of the daily press. I edited, corresponded, became disgusted. The war broke out with Mexico. I flung down the pen and took up the sword. I entered the regiment of New York Volunteers as a 2nd lieutenant, and sailing——"

The letter is torn here, and the remaining portion has unfortunately been lost. The regiment in which Mayne Reid obtained a commission was the 1st New York Volun-

teers, the first regiment raised in New York for the Mexican War, and of which Ward B. Burnett was colonel. Mayne Reid sailed with his regiment in December, 1846, for Vera Cruz.

CHAPTER II.

THE MEXICAN WAR.

Shortly before his death Captain Mayne Reid conceived the idea of publishing his recollections of the Mexican war, and had commenced to roughly sketch out two or three chapters entitled "Mexican War Memories." From these the following account in his own words is taken. The ink was scarcely dry on the last pages when he took to the bed from which he never more arose.

"During the first months of 1847, the look-out sentinel stationed on the crenated parapet of San Juan d'Ulloa must have seen an array of ships unusual in numbers for that coast, so little frequented by mariners:

equally unusual in the kind of craft and the men on board. For, in addition to the half-score ships flying the flags of different nations, some at anchor close to the Castle, some under the lee of Sacrificios Isle, there was a stream of other craft out in the offing, not at anchor or lying to, but passing coast-wise up and down, beyond the most distant range of cannon shot: craft of every size and speciality, schooners, brigs, barques and square-rigged three-masters, from a 200-ton sloop to a ship of as many thousands. Not armed vessels either, though every one of them was loaded to the water-line either with armed and uniformed men or the materials of war; in the large ones a whole regiment of soldiers, in the less, half a regiment, a consort ship containing the other half, and in some but two or three companies, all they were capable of accommodating.

Some carried cavalrymen with their horses, others artillerymen with their mounts and batteries, while a large number were but laden with the senseless material of war-tents, waggons, the effects coming under the head of commissariat and quartermaster stores. Not one out of twenty of these vessels was an actual man-of-war. But one might be seen leading and guiding a group of the others, as if their convoy to some known pre-arranged destination. Just this were they doing, escorting the transport-ships to their anchorage pre-determined.

"Two such anchorages were there, quite thirty miles apart from one another, though in the diaphanous atmosphere of the Vera Cruz coast a bird of eagle eye soaring mid-way between could command a view of both. The one northernmost was the Isle of Lobos; that south, Punta Anton Lizardo. To the

first I shall take the reader, as to it I was first taken myself.

"Lobos Islet lies off the Vera Cruz coast, opposite the town of Tuxpan, and about two miles. It is of circular form, and, if I remember rightly, about a half-mile in diameter. Its availability as an anchorage comes from a surrounding of coral reefs, with a gap in its northern side that admits ships into water the breakers cannot disturb. Chiefly is it a harbour of refuge against the dreaded norther of the Caribbean coast, and a vessel caught in one of these might run for it; but not likely, unless her papers were not presentable to the Vera Cruz custom house. If they were, the shelter under Sacrificios would be safer, and easily reached. In later times the contrabandista is the man who has most availed himself of the advantages of Lobos, and in times

more remote the filibusters; the Tuxpan fishermen also occasionally beach their boats upon it. But that neither buccaneer, smuggler, nor fisherman had frequented it lately, we had proof given us at landing on its shore by its real denizens, the birds. These—several species of sea-fowl—were so tame they flew screaming over the heads of the soldiers, so close that many were knocked down by their muskets. They became shy enough anon.

"We found the island covered all over with a thick growth of *chapparal;* it could not be called forest, as the tallest of the trees was but some fifteen or twenty feet in height. The species were varied, most of them of true tropical character, and amongst them was one that attracted general attention as being the 'india-rubber tree.' Whether it was the true *siphonica elastica*

I cannot say, though likely it was that or an allied species.

"A peculiarity of this isle, and one making it attractive to contrabandista and filibusters, is that fresh water is found on it. Near its summit centre, not over six feet above the ocean level, is a well or hole, artificially dug out in the sand, some six feet deep. The water in this rises and falls with the tide, a law of hydraulics not well understood. Its taste is slightly brackish, but for all that was greatly relished by us—possibly from having been so long upon the cask-water of the transport ships. Near this well we found an old musket and loading pike, rust-eaten, and a very characteristic souvenir of the buccaneers; also the unburied skeleton of a man, who may have been one of their victims.

"The troops landed on Lobos were the 1st New York Volunteers, S. Carolina, 1st and 2nd

Pennsylvania, &c., &c. One of the objects in this debarkation was to give these new regiments an opportunity for drilling, such as the time might permit, before making descent upon the Mexican coast. But there was no drill-ground there, as we saw as soon as we set foot on shore—not enough of open space to parade a single regiment in line, unless it were formed along the ribbon of beach.

"On discovery of this want, there followed instant action to supply it—a curious scene, hundreds of uniformed men plying axe and chopper, hewing and cutting, even the officers with their sabres slashing away at the *chapparal* of Lobos Island: a scene of great activity, and not without interludes of amusement, as now and then a snake, scorpion, or lizard, dislodged from its lair and attempting escape, drew a group of relentless enemies around it.

"In fine, enough surface was cleared for camp and parade-ground. Then up went soldiers' bell-tents and officers' marquees, in company rows and regimental, each regiment occupying its allotted ground.

"The old buccaneers may have caroused in Lobos, but never could they have been merrier than we, nor had they ampler means for promoting cheer, even though resting there after a successful raid. Both our sutlers and the skippers of our transport ships, with a keen eye to contingencies, were well provided with stores of the fancy sort; many the champagne cork had its wire fastenings cut on Lobos, and probably now, in that bare isle, would be found an array of empty bottles lying half buried in the sand.

"Any one curious about the life we led on Lobos Island will find some detailed de-

scription of it in a book I have written called 'The Rifle Rangers,' given to the public as a romance, yet for all more of a reality.

"Our sojourn there was but brief, ending in a fortnight or so, still it may have done something to help out the design for which it was made. It got several regiments of green soldiers through the 'goose-step,' and, better still, taught them the ways of camp and campaigning life.

"Mems.—A fright from threatened small-pox, trouble with insects, scorpions and little crabs. Also curious case of lizard remaining on my tent ridge pole for days without moving. No wonder at Shakespeare's 'Chameleon feeding on air.' Amusements, stories, and songs; mingling of mariners with soldiers. Norther just after landing, well protected under Lobos.

"*La Villa Rica de Vera Cruz* (the

rich city of the True Cross), viewed from the sea, presents a picture unique and imposing. It vividly reminded me of the vignette engravings of cities in Goldsmith's old geography, from which I got my earliest lessons about foreign lands. And just as they were bordered by the engraver's lines, so is Vera Cruz embraced by an *enceinte* of wall. For it is a walled city, without suburbs, scarce a building of any kind beyond the parapet and fosse engirdling it. Roughly speaking, its ground plan is a half circle, having the sea-shore for diameter, this not more than three-quarters of a mile in length. There is no beach or strand intervening between the houses and the sea, the former overlooking the latter, and protected from its wash by a breakwater buttress.

"The architecture is altogether unlike that

of an American or English seaport of similar size. Substantially massive, yet full of graceful lines, most of the private dwellings are of the Hispano-Moriscan order, flat-roofed and parapetted, while the public buildings, chiefly the churches, display a variety of domes, towers and turrets worthy of Inigo Jones or Christopher Wren.

"From near the centre of the semicircle a pier or mole, El Muello, projects about a hundred yards into the sea, and on this all visiting voyagers have to make landing, as at its inner end stands the custom house (*aduana*). Fronting this on an islet, or rather a reef of coral rocks, stands the fortress castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, off shore about a quarter of a mile. It is a low structure with the usual caramite coverings and crenated parapet, surmounted by a watch and flag-tower.

"The anchorage near it is neither good nor ample, better being found under the lee of Sacrificios, a small treeless islet lying south of it nearly a league, and, luckily for us, beyond the range of Ulloa's guns, as also those of a fort at the southern extremity of the city.

"Hundreds of ships may ride there in safety, though not so many nor so safe as at Anton Lizardo. Perhaps never so many, nor of such varied kind, were brought to under it as on March 9th, 1847.

"The surf boats are worthy of a word, as without them our beaching would have been difficult and dangerous, if not impossible. They were of the whale boat speciality, and, as I remember, of two sizes. The larger were built to carry two hundred men, the smaller half this number. Most of them were brought to Anton Lizardo in two large

vessels, and so hastily had they been built and dispatched, that there had not been time to paint them, all appearing in that pale slate colour known to painters as the priming coat. Of course none had any decking, only the thwarts.

"The commander-in-chief had made requisition for 150 of these boats, though only sixty-nine arrived at Anton Lizardo in time to serve the purpose they were intended for.

"The capture of Vera Cruz was an event alike creditable to the army and navy of the United States, for both bore part in it; and creditable not only on account of the courage displayed, but the strategic skill. It was, in truth, one of those *coups* in which boldness was backed up by intelligence even to cunning, this last especially shown in the way we effected a landing.

"The fleet, as already said, lay at Anton Lizardo, each day receiving increase from new arrivals. When at length all that were expected had come to anchor there, the final preparations were made for descent upon the land of Montezuma, and all we now waited for was a favouring wind. I do not remember how many steam vessels we had, but I think only two or three. Could we have commanded the services of a half score steam tugs, the landing might have been effected at an earlier date.

"The day came when the wind proved all that was wanted. A light southerly breeze, blowing up coast almost direct for Vera Cruz, had declared itself before sunrise, and by earliest daybreak all was activity. Alongside each transport ship, as also some of the war vessels, would be seen one or more of the great lead-coloured boats already alluded to,

with streams of men backing down the man-ropes and taking seat in them. These men were soldiers in uniform and full marching order. Knapsacks strapped on, haversacks filled and slung, cartouche box on hip, and gun in hand. In perfect order was the transfer made from ship to boat, and, when in the boats, each company had its own place as on a parade-ground. Where it was a boat that held two companies, one occupied the forward thwarts, the other the stern, their four officers—captain, first lieutenant, second and brevet — conforming to their respective places.

"But there were other than soldiers in the boat, each having its complement of sailors from the ships.

"A gun from the ship that carried our commander-in-chief gave the signal for departure from Punta Anton Lizardo, and

while its boom was still reverberating, ship after ship was seen to spread sail; then, one after another, under careful pilotage, slipped out through the roadway of the coral reef, steaming up coast straight for Vera Cruz, the doomed city.

"While sweeping up the coast, I can perfectly remember what my own feelings were, and how much I admired the strategy of the movement. Who should get credit for it I cannot tell. But I can hardly think that Winfield Scott's was the head that planned this enterprise, my after experience with this man guiding me to regard him as a soldier incapable—in short, such as late severe critics have called him, 'fuss and feathers.' 'The hasty plate of soup' was then ringing around his name. Whoever planned it is deserving of great praise. Its ingenuity, misleading our enemy, lay in making the latter believe that

we intended to make landing at Anton Lizardo. Hence all his disposable force that could be spared from the garrison of Vera Cruz was there to oppose us. And when our ships hastily drew in anchor and went straight for Vera Cruz, as hawks at unprotected quarry, these detached garrison troops saw the mistake they had made. The coast road from Vera Cruz to Anton Lizardo is cut by numerous streams, all bridgeless. To cross them safely needed taking many a roundabout route—so many that the swiftest horse could not reach Vera Cruz so soon as our slowest ship, and we were there before them. We did not aim to enter the port nor come within range of its defending batteries, least of all those of San Juan d'Ulloa. The islet of Sacrificios, about a league from the latter, whose southern end affords sheltering anchorage, was the point we aimed at; and there our

miscellaneous flotilla became concentrated, some of the ships dropping anchor, others remaining adrift. Then the beaching boats, casting off hawsers, were rowed straight for the shore, some half mile off. A shoal strand it was, where a boat's keel touched bottom long before reaching dry land. That in which I was did so, and well do I remember how myself and comrades at once sprang over the gunwales, and, waist deep, waded out to the sand-strewn shore.

"There we encountered no enemy—nothing to obstruct us. All the antagonism we met with or saw was a stray shot or two from some long-range guns mounted on the parapet of the most southern fort of the city. But we had now our feet sure planted on the soil of Mexico"

CHAPTER III.

FIGHTING IN MEXICO.

I GIVE now some accounts written by Mayne Reid of the various engagements of the American army in Mexico. Some of these were written from the seat of war, and others subsequently.

"The capture of Vera Cruz was an affair of artillery. The city was bombarded for several days by a semicircle of batteries placed upon the sandhills in its rear. It at length surrendered, and with it the celebrated castle of San Juan d'Ulloa.

"During the siege a few of us who were fond of fighting found opportunities of being shot at in the back country. The sandhills—

resembling Murlock Banks, only more extensive—form a semicircle round Vera Cruz. The city itself, compactly built, and of picturesque appearance, stands upon a low sandy plain—semicircular, of course—the sea-shore being the boundary diameter. Behind the hills of sand, for leagues inward, extends a low jungly country, covered with the forests of tropical America. This, like all the coast lands of Mexico, is called the *tierra caliente* (hot land). This region is far from being uninhabited. These thickets have their clearings and their cottages, the latter of the most temporary construction that may serve the wants of man in a climate of almost perpetual summer. There are also several villages scattered through this part of the *tierra caliente*.

"During the siege the inhabitants of these cottages (*ranchos*) and villages banded to-

gether under the name *jarochos* or *guerrilleros*, but better known to our soldiers by the general title *rancheros*, and kept up a desultory warfare in our rear, occasionally committing murders on straggling parties of soldiers who had wandered from our lines.

"Several expeditions were sent out against them, but with indifferent success. I was present in many of these expeditions, and on one occasion, when in command of about thirty men, I fell in with a party of *guerrilleros* nearly a hundred strong, routed them, and, after a straggling fight of several hours, drove them back upon a strong position, the village of Medellini. In this skirmish I was fired at by from fifty to a hundred muskets and escopettes, and, although at the distance of not over two hundred yards, had the good fortune to escape being hit.

"One night I was sent in command of a scouting party to reconnoitre a guerilla camp supposed to be some five miles away in the country. It was during the mid-hours of the night, but under one of those brilliant moonlights for which the cloudless sky of Southern Mexico is celebrated. Near the edge of an opening—the prairie of Santa Fe—our party was brought suddenly to a halt at the sight of an object that filled every one of us with horror. It was the dead body of a soldier, a member of the corps to which the scouting party belonged. The body lay at full length upon its back; the hair was clotted with blood and standing out in every direction; the teeth were clenched in agony; the eyes glassy and open, as if glaring upon the moon that shone in mid-heaven above. One arm had been cut off at the elbow, while a large incision in

the left breast showed where the heart had been torn out, to satisfy the vengeance of an inhuman enemy. There were shot wounds and sword cuts all over the body, and other mutilations made by the zopilotes and wolves. Notwithstanding all, it was recognized as that of a brave young soldier, who was much esteemed by his comrades, and who for two days had been missing from the camp. He had imprudently strayed beyond the line of pickets, and fallen into the hands of the enemy's *guerrilleros*.

"The men would not pass on without giving to his mutilated remains the last rites of burial. There was neither spade nor shovel to be had; but fixing bayonets, they dug up the turf, and depositing the body, gave it such sepulture as was possible. One who had been his bosom friend, cutting a slip from a bay laurel close by, planted

it in the grave. The ceremony was performed in deep silence, for they knew that they were on dangerous ground, and that a single shout or shot at that moment might have been the signal for their destruction.

"I afterwards learnt that this fiendish act was partly due to a spirit of retaliation. One of the American soldiers, a very brutal fellow, had shot a Mexican, a young Jarocho peasant, who was seen near the roadside chopping some wood with his machete. It was an act of sheer wantonness, or for sport, just as a thoughtless boy might fire at a bird to see whether he could kill it. Fortunately the Mexican was not killed, but his elbow was shattered by the shot so badly that the whole arm required amputation. It was the wantonness of the act that provoked retaliation; and after this the *lex talionis* became common around Vera Cruz,

and was practised in all its deadly severity long after the place was taken. Several other American soldiers, straying thoughtlessly beyond the lines, suffered in the same way, their bodies being found mutilated in a precisely similar manner. Strange to say, the man who was the cause of this vengeance became himself one of its victims. Not then, at Vera Cruz, but long afterwards, in the Valley of Mexico; and this was the strangest part of it. Shortly after the American army entered the capital, his body was found in the canal of Las Vigas, alongside the 'Chinampas,' or floating gardens, gashed all over with wounds, made by the knives of assassins, and mutilated just as the others had been. It might have been a mere coincidence, but it was supposed at the time that the one-armed Jarocho must have followed him up, with that implacable

spirit of vengeance characteristic of his race, until at length, finding him alone, he had completed his vendetta.

"Vera Cruz being taken, we marched for the interior. Puente Nacional, the next strong point, had been fortified, but the enemy, deeming it too weak, fell back upon Cerro Gordo, another strong pass about twenty miles from the former. Here they were again completely routed, although numbering three times our force. In this action I was cheated out of the opportunity of having my name recorded, by the cowardice or imbecility of the major of my regiment, who on that day commanded the detachment of which I formed part. In an early part of the action I discovered a large body of the enemy escaping through a narrow gorge running down the face of a high precipice. The force which this officer commanded had

been sufficient to have captured these fugitives, but he not only refused to go forward, but refused to give me a sufficient command to accomplish the object. I learnt afterwards that Santa Anna, commander-in-chief of the Mexican army, had escaped by this gorge.

"After the victory of Cerro Gordo, the army pushed forward to Jalapa, a fine village half way up the table-lands. After a short rest here we again took the road, and crossing a spur of the Cordilleras, swept over the plains of Perote, and entered the city of Puebla. Yes, with a force of 3,000 men, we entered that great city, containing a population of at least 75,000. The inhabitants were almost paralyzed with astonishment and mortification at seeing the smallness of our force. The balconies, windows and house-tops were crowded with

spectators; and there were enough men in the streets—had they been men—to have stoned us to death. At Puebla we halted for reinforcements a period of about two months.

"In the month of August, 1847, we numbered about 12,000 effective men, and leaving a small garrison here, with the remainder —10,000—we took the road for the capital. The city of Mexico lies about eighty miles from Puebla. Half way, another spur of the Andes must be crossed. On the 10th of August, with an immense siege and baggage-train, we moved over these pine-clad hills, and entered the Valley of Mexico. Here halt was made for reconnaissance, which lasted several days. The city stands in the middle of a marshy plain interspersed with lakes, and is entered by eight roads or causeways. These were known to be fortified,

but especially that which leads through the gate San Lazaro, on the direct road to Puebla. This was covered by a strong work on the hill El Piñol, and was considered by General Scott as next to impregnable. To turn this, a wide diversion to the north or south was necessary. The latter was adopted, and an old road winding around Lake Chalco —through the old town of that name, and along the base of the southern mountain ridge—was found practicable.

"We took this road, and after a slow march of four days our vanguard debouched on the great National Road, which rounds southward from the city of Mexico to Acapulco. This road was also strongly fortified, and it was still further resolved to turn the fortifications on it by making more to the west. San Augustin de las Cuenas, a village five leagues from Mexico on the National

Road, became the point of reserve. On the 19th of August, General Worth moved down the National Road, as a feint to hold the enemy in check at San Antonio (strongly fortified) while the divisions of Generals Worth and Twiggs, with the brigade of Shields—to which I was attached—commenced moving across the Pedregal, a tract of country consisting of rocks, jungle and lava, and almost impassable. On the evening of the 19th, we had crossed the Pedregal, and became engaged with a strong body of the enemy under General Valencia, at a place called Contreras. Night closed on the battle, and the enemy still held his position.

"It rained all night; we sat, not slept, in the muddy lanes of a poor village, San Geronimo—a dreadful night. Before daybreak, General Persifer Smith, who commanded in this battle, had taken his measures,

and shortly after sunrise we were at it again. In less than an hour that army 'of the north,' as Valencia's division was styled, being men of San Luis Potosi and other northern States, the flower of the Mexican army, was scattered and in full flight for the city of Mexico.

"This army was 6,000 strong, backed by a reserve of 6,000 more under Santa Anna himself. The reserve did not act, owing, it was said, to some jealousy between Valencia and Santa Anna. In this battle we captured a crowd of prisoners and twenty-seven pieces of artillery.

"The road, as we supposed, was now open to the city; a great mistake, as the sharp skirmishes which our light troops encountered as we advanced soon led us to believe. All at once we stumbled upon the main body of the enemy, collected behind two

of the strongest field works I have ever seen, in a little village called Cherubusco.

"The road to the village passed over a small stream spanned by a bridge, which was held in force by the Mexicans, and it soon became evident that, unless something like a flank movement were made, they would not be dislodged. The bridge was well fortified and the army attacked fruitlessly in front.

"General Shields' brigade was ordered to go round by the hacienda of Los Portales and attack the enemy on the flank. They got as far as the barns at Los Portales, but would go no farther. They were being shot down by scores, and the men eagerly sought shelter behind walls or wherever else it could be found. Colonel Ward B. Burnett made a desperate attempt to get the companies together, but it was unsuccessful, and he himself fell, badly wounded.

"The situation had become very critical. I was in command of the Grenadier Company of New York Volunteers, and saw that a squadron of Mexican lancers were getting ready to charge, and knew that if they came on while the flanking party were in such a state of disorganization the fight would end in a rout. On the other hand, if we charged on them, the chances were the enemy would give way and run. In any case, nothing could be worse than the present state of inaction and slaughter.

"The lieutenant-colonel of the South Carolina Volunteers—their colonel, Butler, having been wounded, was not on the field—was carrying the blue palmetto flag of the regiment. I cried out to him:

"'Colonel, will you lead the men on a charge?'

"Before he could answer, I heard something snap, and the colonel fell, with one leg broken at the ankle by a shot. I took the flag, and as the wounded officer was being carried off the field, he cried:

"'Major Gladden, take the flag. Captain Blanding, remember Moultrie, Lowndes and old Charleston!'

"Hurrying back to my men, reaching them on the extreme right, I rushed on in front of the line, calling out: 'Soldiers, will you follow me to the charge?'

"'Ve vill!' shouted Corporal Haup, a Swiss. The order to charge being given, away we went, the Swiss and John Murphy, a brave Irishman, being the first two after their leader—myself.

"The Mexicans seeing cold steel coming towards them with such gusto, took to their heels and made for the splendid road leading

to the city of Mexico, which offered unequalled opportunities for flight.

"A broad ditch intervened between the highway and the field across which we were charging. Thinking this was not very deep, as it was covered with a green scum, I plunged into it. It took me nearly up to the armpits, and I struggled out all covered with slime and mud. The men avoided my mishap, coming to the road by a dryer but more roundabout path.

"As we got on the road Captain Phil Kearney came thundering over the bridge with his company, all mounted on dappled greys. The gallant Phil had a weakness for dappled greys. As they approached I sang out: 'Boys, have you breath enough left to give a cheer for Captain Kearney?'

"Phil acknowledged the compliment with

a wave of his sword, as he went swinging by towards the works the enemy had thrown up across this road. Just as he reached this spot, the recall bugle sounded, and at that moment Kearney received the shot that cost him an arm.

"Disregarding the bugle call, we of the infantry kept on, when a rider came tearing up, calling upon us to halt.

"'What for?' I cried.

"'General Scott's orders.'

"'We shall rue this halt,' was my rejoinder. 'The city is at our mercy; we can take it now, and should.'

"Lieut.-Colonel Baxter, then in command of the New York Volunteers, called out:

"'For God's sake, Mayne Reid, obey orders, and halt the men.'

"At this appeal I faced round to my followers, and shouted 'Halt!'

"The soldiers came up abreast of me, and one big North Irishman cried:

"'Do you say halt?'

"I set my sword towards them, and again shouted 'Halt!' This time I was obeyed, the soldiers crying out:

"'We'll halt for you, sir, but for nobody else.'"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ASSAULT ON CHAPULTEPEC.

Captain Mayne Reid continues the account:

"Thus was the American army halted in its victorious career on the 20th of August. Another hour, and it would have been in the streets of Mexico. The commander-in-chief, however, had other designs; and with the bugle recall that summoned the dragoons to retire, all hostile operations ended for the time. The troops slept upon the field.

"On the following day the four divisions of the American army separated for their respective headquarters in different villages. Worth crossed over to Tacubaya, which became the headquarters of the army;

Twiggs held the village of San Angel; Pillow rested at Miscuac, a small Indian village between San Angel and Tacubaya, while the Volunteer and Marine division fell back on San Augustine. An armistice had been entered into between the commanders-in-chief of the two armies.

"This armistice was intended to facilitate a treaty of peace; for it was thought that the Mexicans would accept any terms rather than see their ancient city at the mercy of a foreign army. No doubt, however, a great mistake was made, as the armistice gave the crafty Santa Anna a chance to fortify an inner line of defence, the key to which was the strong Castle of Chapultepec, which had to be taken three weeks later with the loss of many brave men.

"The commissioners of both governments met at a small village near Tacubaya, and

the American commissioner demanded, as a necessary preliminary to peace, the cession of Upper and Lower California, all New Mexico, Texas, parts of Sonora, Coahuila and Tamaulipas. Although this was in general a wild, unsettled tract of country, yet it constituted more than one-half the territory of Mexico, and the Mexican commissioners would not, even if they dared, agree to such a dismemberment. The armistice was therefore abortive, and on the 6th of September, the American commander-in-chief sent a formal notice to the enemy that it had ceased to exist. This elicited from Santa Anna an insulting reply, and on the same day the enemy was seen in great force to the left of Tacubaya, at a building called Molino del Rey, which was a large stone mill, with a foundry, belonging to the government, and where most of their cannon

had been made. It is a building notorious in the annals of Mexican history as the place where the unfortunate Texan prisoners suffered the most cruel treatment from their barbarous captors. It lies directly under the guns of Chapultepec, from which it is distant about a quarter of a mile, and it is separated from the hill of Chapultepec by a thick wood of almond trees.

"On the afternoon of the 7th of September, Captain Mason, of the Engineers, was sent to reconnoitre the enemy's position. His right lay at a strong stone building, with bastions, at some distance from Molino del Rey, while his left rested in the works around the latter.

"The building on the right is called Casa Mata. It is to be presumed that this position of the enemy was taken to prevent our army from turning the Castle of Cha-

pultepec and entering the city by the Tacubaya road and the gate San Cosme. All the other *garitas*, Piedas, Nino Perdido, San Antonio and Belen were strongly fortified, and guarded by a large body of the enemy's troops. Having in all at this time about 30,000 men, they had no difficulty in placing a strong guard at every point of attack.

"On the 7th General Worth was ordered to attack and carry the enemy's lines at Molino del Rey. His attack was to be planned on the night of the 7th and executed on the morning of the 8th.

"On the night of the 7th the 1st Division, strengthened by a brigade of the 3rd, moved forward in front of the enemy. The dispositions made were as follows:

"It was discovered that the weakest point of the enemy's lines was at a place about

midway between the Casa Mata and Molino del Rey. This point, however, was strengthened by a battery of several guns.

"An assaulting party of 500 men, commanded by Major Wright, were detailed to attack the battery, after it had been cannonaded by Captain Huger with the battering guns. To the right of this assaulting party Garland's brigade took position within supporting distance.

"On our left, and to the enemy's right, Clark's brigade, commanded by Brevet-Colonel Mackintosh, with Duncan's battery, were posted; while the supporting brigade from Pillow's division lay between the assaulting column and Clark's brigade.

"At break of day the action commenced. Huger, with the 24th, opened on the enemy's centre. Every discharge told; and the enemy seemed to retire. No answer was

made from his guns. Worth, becoming at length convinced — fatal conviction — that the works in the centre had been abandoned, ordered the assaulting column to advance.

"These moved rapidly down the slope, Major Wright leading. When they had arrived within about half musket shot the enemy opened upon this gallant band the most dreadful fire it has ever been the fate of a soldier to sustain. Six pieces from the field battery played upon their ranks; while the heavy guns from Chapultepec, and nearly six thousand muskets from the enemy's entrenchments, mowed them down in hundreds. The first discharge covered the ground with dead and dying. One half the command at least fell with this terrible cataract of bullets. The others, retiring for a moment, took shelter behind some magney, or, in fact,

anything that would lend a momentary protection.

"The light battalion and the 11th Infantry now came to their relief, and springing forward amid the clouds of smoke and deadly fire, the enemy's works were soon in our possession. At the same time the right and left wing had become hotly engaged with the left and right of the enemy. Garland's brigade, with Duncan's battery, after driving out a large body of infantry, occupied the mills, while the command of Colonel Mackintosh attacked the Casa Mata.

"This building proved to be a strong work with deep ditches and entrenchments. The brigade moved rapidly forward to assault it, but on reaching the wide ditch the tremendous fire of muskets to which they were exposed, as well as the heavy guns from

the Castle, obliged them to fall back on their own battery.

"Duncan now opened his batteries upon this building, and with such effect that the enemy soon retreated from it, leaving it unoccupied.

"At this time the remaining brigade of Pillow's division, as well as that of Twiggs', came on the ground, but they were too late. The enemy had already fallen back, and Molino del Rey and the Casa Mata were in possession of the American troops. The latter was shortly after blown up, and all the implements in the foundry, with the cannon moulds, having been destroyed, our army was ordered to return to Tacubaya.

"Thus ended one of the most bloody and fruitless engagements ever fought by the American army. Six hundred and fifty of

our brave troops were either killed or wounded, while the loss of the enemy did not amount to more than half this number.

"The fatal action at Molino del Rey cast a gloom over the whole army. Nothing had been gained. The victorious troops fell back to their former positions, and the vanquished assumed a bolder front, celebrating the action as a victory. The Mexican commander gave out that the attack was intended for Chapultepec, and had consequently failed. This, among his soldiers, received credence and doubled their confidence; we, on the other hand, called it a victory on our side. Another such victory and the American army would never have left the Valley of Mexico.

"On the night of the 11th of September, at midnight, two small parties of men were seen to go out from the village of Tacubaya,

moving silently along different roads. One party directed itself along an old road toward Molino del Rey, and about half way between the village and this latter point halted. The other moved a short distance along the direct road to Chapultepec and halted in like manner. They did not halt to sleep; all night long these men were busy piling up earth, filling sand-bags, and laying the platforms of a gun battery.

"When day broke these batteries were finished, their guns in position, and, much to the astonishment of the Mexican troops, a merry fire was opened upon the Castle. This fire was soon answered, but with little effect. By ten o'clock another battery from Molino del Rey, with some well-directed shots from a howitzer at the same point, seemed to annoy the garrison exceedingly.

"A belt of wood lies between the Castle and Molino del Rey on the south. A stone wall surrounds these woods. Well-garrisoned, Chapultepec would be impregnable. The belief is that 1,000 Americans could hold it against all Mexico. They might starve them out, or choke them with thirst, but they could not drive them out of it. There are but few fortresses in the world so strong in natural advantages.

"During the whole of the 12th the shot from the American batteries kept playing upon the walls of the Castle, answered by the guns of the fortress, and an incessant fire of musketry was kept up by the skirmishing party in the woods of Molino del Rey. Towards evening the Castle began to assume a battered and beleaguered appearance. Shot and shell had made ruin on every point, and several of the enemy's guns were dismounted.

"To enumerate the feats of artillerists on this day would fill a volume. A twenty-pound shot from a battery commanded by Captain Huger and Lieutenant Hagney entered the muzzle of one of the enemy's howitzers and burst the piece. It was not a chance shot. This battery was placed on the old road between Tacubaya and Molino del Rey. The gate of the Castle fronts this way, and the Calzada, or winding road from the Castle to the foot of the hill, was exposed to the fire. As the ground lying to the north and east of Chapultepec was still in possession of the enemy, a constant intercourse was kept up with the Castle by this Calzada.

"On the morning of the 11th, however, when Huger's and Hagney's battery opened, the Calzada became a dangerous thoroughfare. The latter officer found that his shot

thrown on the face of the road ricochetted upon the walls with terrible effect, and consequently most of his shots were aimed at this point. It was amusing to see the Mexican officers who wished to enter or go out of the Castle wait until Hagney's guns were discharged, and then gallop over the Calzada as if the devil were after them.

"A Mexican soldier at the principal gate was packing a mule with ordnance.

"'Can you hit that fellow, Hagney?' was asked.

"'I'll try,' was the quiet and laconic reply. The long gun was pointed and levelled. At this moment the soldier stooped by the side of the mule in the act of tightening the girth. 'Fire!' said Hagney, and almost simultaneous with the shot a cloud of dust rose over the causeway. When this cleared away the mule was seen running wild along the

Calzada, while the soldier lay dead by the wall.

"On the day when Chapultepec was stormed, September 13th, 1847, I was in command of the Grenadier Company of 2nd New York Volunteers—my own—and a detachment of United States Marines, acting with us as light infantry, my orders being to stay by and guard the battery we had built on the south-eastern side of the Castle during the night of the 11th. It was about a thousand yards from, and directly in front of, the Castle's main gate, through which our shots went crashing all the day. The first assault had been fixed for the morning of the 13th, a storming party of 500 men, or 'forlorn hope,' as it was called, having volunteered for this dangerous duty. These were of all arms of the service, a captain of regular infantry having charge of them,

with a lieutenant of Pennsylvanian Volunteers as his second in command.

"At an early hour the three divisions of our army, Worth's, Pillow's and Quitman's, closed in upon Chapultepec, our skirmishers driving the enemy's outposts before them; some of these retreating up the hill and into the Castle, others passing around it and on towards the city.

"It was now expected that our storming party would do the work assigned to it, and for which it had volunteered. Standing by our battery, at this time necessarily silent, with the artillery and engineer officers who had charge of it, Captain Huger and Lieutenant Hagney, we three watched the advance of the attacking line, the puffs of smoke from musketry and rifles indicating the exact point to which it had reached. Anxiously we watched it. I need not say,

nor add, that our anxiety became apprehension when we saw that about half-way up the slope there was a halt, something impeding its forward movement. I knew that if Chapultepec were not taken, neither would the city, and failing this, not a man of us might ever leave the Valley of Mexico alive.

"Worth's injudicious attempt upon the intrenchments of Molino del Rey—to call it by no harsher name—our first retreat during the campaign, had greatly demoralized our men, while reversely affecting the Mexicans, inspiring them with a courage they had never felt before. And there were 30,000 of these to our 6,000—five to one—to say nothing of a host of *rancheros* in the country around and *leperos* in the city, all exasperated against us, the invaders. We had become aware, moreover, that Alvarez

with his spotted Indians (*pintos*) had swung round in our rear, and held the mountain passes behind us, so that retreat upon Puebla would have been impossible. This was not my belief alone, but that of every intelligent officer in the army: the two who stood beside me feeling sure of it as myself. This certainty, combined with the slow progress of the attacking party, determined me to participate in the assault. As the senior engineer officer out-ranked me, it was necessary I should have his leave to forsake the battery—now needing no further defence—a leave freely and instantly given, with the words: 'Go, and God be with you!'

"The Mexican flag was still waving triumphantly over the Castle, and the line of smoke-puffs had not got an inch nearer it; nor was there much change in the situation when, after a quick run across the interven-

ing ground with my following of volunteers and marines, we came up with the storming party at halt, and irregularly aligned along the base of the hill. For what reason they were staying there we knew not at the time, but I afterwards heard it was some trouble about scaling ladders. I did not pause then to inquire, but, breaking through their line with my brave followers, pushed on up the slope. Near the summit I found a scattered crowd of soldiers, some of them in the grey uniform of the Voltigeur Regiment; others, 9th, 14th and 15th Infantry. They were the skirmishers, who had thus far cleared the way for us, and far ahead of the 'forlorn hope.' But beyond lay the real area of danger, a slightly sloping ground, some forty yards in width, between us and the Castle's outward wall—in short, the glacis. It was commanded by three pieces of cannon on the

parapet, which swept it with grape and canister as fast as they could be loaded and fired. There seemed no chance to advance farther without meeting certain death. But it would be death all the same if we did not —such was my thought at that moment.

"Just as I reached this point there was a momentary halt, which made it possible to be heard; and the words I then spoke, or rather shouted, are remembered by me as though it were but yesterday:

"'Men! if we don't take Chapultepec, the American army is lost. Let us charge up to the walls.'

"A voice answered: 'We'll charge if any one leads us.'

"Another adding: 'Yes, we're ready!'

"At that instant the three guns on the parapet belched forth their deadly showers almost simultaneously. My heart bounded

with joy at hearing them go off thus together —it was our opportunity; and, quickly comprehending it, I leaped over the scarp which had sheltered us, calling out:

"'Come on; I'll lead you!'

"It did not need looking back to know that I was followed. The men I had appealed to were not the men to stay behind, else they would not have been there, and all came after.

"When about half-way across the open ground I saw the parapet crowded with Mexican artillerists in uniforms of dark blue with crimson facings, each musket in hand, and all aiming, as I believed, at my own person. On account of a crimson silk sash I was wearing, they no doubt fancied me a general at least. The volley was almost as one sound, and I avoided it by throwing myself flat along the earth, only getting

touched on one of the fingers of my sword-hand, another shot passing through the loose cloth of my overalls. Instantly on my feet again, I made for the wall, which I was scaling, when a bullet from an escopette went tearing through my thigh, and I fell into the ditch."

* * * * *

Even as he lay wounded in the ditch, brave Mayne Reid painfully raised himself, addressing the men and encouraging them. Above the din of musketry his voice was heard.

"'For God's sake, men, don't leave that wall.'

"Only a few scattered shots were fired after this. The scaling ladders came up, and some scores of men went swarming over the parapet and Chapultepec was taken.

"The second man up to the walls of the

Castle was Corporal Haup, the Swiss, when he fell, shot through the face, over the body of Mayne Reid, covering the latter with his blood. The poor fellow endeavoured to roll himself off, saying, 'I'm not hurt so badly as you.' But he was dead before Mayne Reid was carried off the field.

"Mayne Reid's lieutenant, Hypolite Dardonville, a brave young Frenchman, dragged the Mexican flag down from its staff, planting the Stars and Stripes in its place—the standard of the New York regiment.

"The contest was not yet over. The advantage must be followed up, and the city entered. Worth's division obliquing to the right followed the enemy on the Tabuca Road, and through the gate of San Cosme; while the volunteers, with the rifle and one or two other regiments, detached from the division of General Twiggs, were led along

the aqueduct towards the citadel and the gate of Belen. Inch by inch did these gallant fellows drive back their opponents; and he who led them, the veteran Quitman, was ever foremost in the fight.

"A very storm of bullets rained along this road, and hundreds of brave men fell to rise no more; but when night closed the gates of Belen and San Cosme were in possession of the Americans.

"During the still hours of midnight the Mexican army, to the number of some 20,000, stole out of the city and took the road for Guadaloupe.

"Next morning at daybreak, the remnant of the American army, in all less than 3,000 men, entered the city without further opposition, and formed up in the Grand Plaza. Ere sunrise the American star-spangled banner floated proudly over the Palace of

Moctezuma, and proclaimed that the city of the Aztecs was in possession of the Americans.

"Chapultepec was in reality the key to the city. If the former were not captured, the latter in all probability would not have been taken at that time, or by that army.

"The city of Mexico stands on a perfectly level plain, where water is reached by digging but a few inches below the surface; this everywhere around its walls, and for miles on every side.

"It does not seem to have occurred to military engineers that a position of this kind is the strongest in the world; the most difficult to assault and easiest to defend. It only needs to clear the surrounding *terrain* of houses, trees, or aught that might give shelter to the besiegers, and obstruct the fire of the besieged. As in the wet ground trenching is impossible, there is no other

way of approach. Even a charge by cavalry going at full gallop must fail; they would be decimated, or utterly destroyed, long before arriving at the entrenched line.

"These were the exact conditions under which Mexico had to be assaulted by the American army. There were no houses outside of the city walls, no cover of any kind, save rows of tall poplar trees lining the sides of the outgoing roads, and most of these had been cut down. How then was the place to be stormed, or rather approached within storming distance? The eyes of some skilled American engineers rested upon the two aqueducts running from Chapultepec into the suburbs of the city. Their mason work, with its massive piers and open arches between, promised the necessary cover for skirmishers, to be supported by close following battalions.

"And they did afford this very shelter, enabling the American army to capture the city of Mexico. But to get at the aqueducts Chapultepec need to be first taken, otherwise the besiegers would have had the enemy both in front and rear. Hence the desperate and determined struggle at the taking of the Castle, and the importance of its succeeding. Had it failed, I have no hesitation in giving my opinion that no American who fought that day in the Valley of Mexico would ever have left it alive. Scott's army was already weakened by the previous engagements, too much so to hold itself three days on the defensive. Retreat would have been not disastrous, but absolutely impossible. The position was far worse than that of Lord Sale, in the celebrated Cabool expedition. All the passes leading out of the valley by which the Americans might have attempted

escape were closed by columns of cavalry. The Indian general, Alvarez, with his host of spotted horsemen, the Pintos of the Acapulco region, had occupied the main road by Rio Frio the moment after the Americans marched in. No wonder these fought on that day as for very life. Every intelligent soldier among them knew that in their attack upon Chapultepec there were but two alternatives: success and life, or defeat and death."

The following are extracts from dispatches and official documents:

From Major-General Winfield Scott, commander in-chief.

"September 18, 1847.

"The following are the officers and corps most distinguished in these brilliant operations. . . . . Particularly a detachment under Lieutenant Reid, New York Volun-

teers, consisting of a company of the same, with one of marines."

From Major-General G. J. Pillow, commanding division.

"September 18, 1847.

"Lieut. Reid, in command of the one company of the New York Regiment and one of marines, came forward in advance of the other troops of this command, Quitman's, participated in the assault and was severely wounded."

From Major-General J. A. Quitman, commanding division.

"September 29, 1847.

"Two detachments from my command not heretofore mentioned in this report should be noticed. Captain Gallagher and Lieutenant Reid, who, with their companies

of New York Volunteers, had been detailed on the morning of the 12th, by General Shields, to the support of our battery, No. 2, well performed the service. The former, by the orders of Captain Huger, was detained at that battery during the storming of Chapultepec. The latter, a brave and energetic young officer, being relieved from the battery on the advance to the Castle, hastened to the assault, and was among the first to ascend the crest of the hill, where he was severely wounded. . . The gallant New York Regiment claims for their standard the honour of being the first waved from the battlements of Chapultepec."

From Brigadier-General Shields.

"September 25, 1847.

"The New York flag and Co. B of that regiment, under the command of a gallant

young officer, Lieutenant Reid, were among the first to mount the ramparts of the Castle, and then display the Stars and Stripes to the admiration of the army."

From Captain Huger, chief of ordnance.

"September 20, 1847.

"As there were two companies in support of batteries 2 and 3, I now allowed one of them, commanded by Lieutenant Reid, New York Volunteers, his command, composed of volunteers and marines, to join its proper division, and he gallantly pushed up the hill and joined it during the storming of the Castle."

From Colonel Ward B. Burnett, commanding New York Regiment.

"Order No. 35.

"The following promotions and appointments having been made 'upon good and

sufficient recommendations' will be obeyed and respected accordingly:

"2nd Lieutenant Mayne Reid, of Co. B, to be 1st lieutenant of Co. G, vice Innes, promoted."

CHAPTER V.

HE IS MOURNED AS DEAD.

It was reported that Lieutenant Mayne Reid had died of his wounds. This intelligence reached his family in Ireland, who mourned him as dead until the joyful contradiction arrived. It may be interesting as evidence of his reputation at this time to give an extract from a contemporary notice in the *Newport News*.

"The lamented Lieut. Reid.

"Lieut. Reid has been in this country some five or six years, and during that time

has been mostly connected with the press, either as an associate editor or correspondent; in this last capacity, he passed the summer of 1846 in Newport, R. I., engaged in writing letters to the *New York Herald*, under the signature of 'Ecolier.' It was at this time that we became acquainted with him, and there are many others in the community who will join us in bearing testimony to his worth as a man, all of whom will be grieved at the announcement of his death. He returned to New York about the first of September, and shortly after sailed for Mexico with his regiment. He was at the battle of Monterey, and distinguished himself in that bloody affair. We published a little poem from his pen, entitled 'Monterey,' about three months ago, which will undoubtedly be remembered by our readers;

towards the close of the poem, was this stanza:

> 'We were not many—we who pressed
> Beside the brave who fell that day;
> But who of us has not confessed
> He'd rather share their warrior rest,
> Than not have been at Monterey?'

Alas! for human glory! The departed, probably, little thought at the time he penned the above lines that he should so soon be sharing 'their warrior rest.' At the storming of Chapultepec he was severely wounded, and died soon after from his wounds. He was a man of singular talents, and gave much promise as a writer. His temperament was exceedingly nervous, and his fancy brilliant. His best productions may be found in 'Godey's Book,' about three or four years ago, under the signature of 'Poor Scholar.' It is mournful that talents like his should be so early

sacrificed, and that his career should be so soon closed, far—very far—from the land of his birth and the bosom of his home, as well as the land of his adoption. But thus it is! When the day arrives for our army to return, if it ever does, it will present a sad spectacle. The ranks will be thinned, and hearts made sorrowful at their coming that hoped to rejoice in the fullest fruition of gladness. Many a gallant spirit has fallen to rise no more; and the wild note of the bugle cannot awake them to duty, or the sweeter call of friendship and home. The triumphs may be as splendid as ever crowned a human effort, but they have been purchased at the price of noble lives, and too dearly not to mingle the tear of sorrow with the shout of joy."

The verses by Captain Mayne Reid referred to are:

MONTEREY.

We were not many—we who stood
Before the iron sleet that day—
Yet many a gallant spirit would
Give half his years if he but could
Have been with us at Monterey.

Now here, now there, the shot it hailed
In deadly drifts of fiery spray,
Yet not a single soldier quailed,
When wounded comrades round them wailed
Their dying shouts at Monterey.

And on—still on our columns kept,
Through walls of flame, its withering way;
Where fell the dead, the living stept,
Still charging on the guns which swept
The slippery streets of Monterey.

The foe himself recoiled aghast,
When, striking where he strongest lay,
We swooped his flanking batteries past,
And braving full their murderous blast,
Stormed home the towers of Monterey.

Our banners on those turrets wave,
And there our evening bugles play;
Where orange boughs above their grave
Keep green the memory of the brave
Who fought and fell at Monterey.

We were not many—we who pressed
Beside the brave who fell that day;
But who of us has not confessed
He'd rather share their warrior rest,
Than not have been at Monterey?

At a public dinner held in the city of Columbus, Ohio, to celebrate the capture of Mexico, Mayne Reid's memory was toasted, and the following lines, by a young poetess of Ohio, were recited with great effect:

DIRGE.

Gone—gone—gone,
Gone to his dreamless sleep;
And spirits of the brave,
Watching o'er his lone grave,
Weep—weep—weep.

* * * * *

Mourn—mourn—mourn,
Mother, to sorrow long wed!
Far o'er the mighty deep,
Where the brave coldly sleep,
Thy warrior son lies dead.

Lone—lone—lone,
In thine own far island home,
Ere thy life's task is done,
Oft with the setting sun,
O'er the sea thy thoughts will roam.

* * * * *

Sound—sound—sound,
The trumpet, while thousands die!
Madly forcing his way,
Through the blood-dashing spray
He beareth our banner on high!

Woe—woe—woe!
Like a thought he hath sunk to rest.
Slow they bear him away,
In stern martial array,
The flag and the sword on his breast.

High—high—high,
High in the temple of fame,
The poet's fadeless wreath,
And the soldier's sheath,
Are engraven above his name.

Long—long—long,
As time to the earth shall belong,
The sad wind o'er, the surge
Shall chant its low dirge
To this peerless child of song.

Gone—gone—gone!
Gone to his dreamless sleep;
And spirits of the brave,
Watching o'er his lone grave,
Weep—weep—weep.

The muse of the poetess perhaps required chastening, but the verses are not without power and at least show the love and admiration felt for the hero.

CHAPTER VI.

MAYNE REID REMAINS IN MEXICO. CONTEMPORARY NOTICES IN THE UNITED STATES.

Mayne Reid was laid up in the city of Mexico for some time. It was at first supposed that amputation of the leg would be necessary; but on the doctors consulting, they came to the conclusion that this would be certain death, as the bullet had only just escaped severing the femoral artery. At last, under skilful care, he made a good recovery, and by the following December we find him on the eve of fighting a duel, but the challenged one "backed out," his friend sending the following letter:

"City of Mexico,

"Dec. 19th, 1847.

"SIR,—

"Captain McKinstry has received your note of yesterday, and has requested me, as his friend, to inform you that he has not made any remarks reflecting upon you as a gentleman and a man of honour.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN B. GRAYSON,

"Capt. 165 A.

"Lieut. Mayne Reid,

"N. Y. Volunteers."

The following letter from Mr. Piatt was addressed to Dr. Halstead, city of Mexico:

"Mac-o-Chee, Dec. 1847.

"DR. HALSTEAD,

"DEAR SIR,—

"I address you with pain and regret

on account of the late intelligence brought us by the papers of the severe wound received by Lieut. Reid and his death. Whilst we look with pride upon the many gallant deeds he performed, it but poorly remunerates us for so severe a loss. And we should receive with sad but infinite pleasure any further account of him whilst wounded. It is with regret that we call upon you to give us this sad intelligence, as it may inconvenience you, but the deep interest we felt for Mr. Reid has tempted us to trouble you with these inquiries, and remain

"Yours respectfully,

"A. L. PIATT."

The Piatts were originally a French family, and the elder Mr. Piatt, the writer of the letter, was a great friend of Mayne Reid.

It is not given to every man to read obituary notices of himself, but this happened to Mayne Reid more than once. So marvellous, indeed, were his recoveries from the brink of death, that he came to be regarded by his friends as bearing a "charmed life." Two or three weeks after the announcement of his death, the *New York Herald* published a contradiction of the report:

"Through misinformation, it was currently reported that Lieutenant Mayne Reid, whose gallant behaviour at the battle of Chapultepec called forth a merited compliment from General Scott in one of his late dispatches, had died of his wounds. We are informed by one of our returned officers that although wounded severely by an escopette ball in the left leg above the knee, he has since recovered, and intends to remain. Of course he will be promoted."

In the *National Gazette* of Philadelphia was printed:—"We perceive in the list of wounded in the recent battles in Mexico, the name of Lieutenant Mayne Reid, of New York. If we mistake not, the gentleman named is favourably known throughout the country as a writer, and a contributor to our leading magazines. For several years he resided in Philadelphia. While in this city he won for himself many friends, as well as a high literary reputation. His first essays appeared as the compositions of the 'Poor Scholar.' Lieutenant Reid is a ripe scholar as well as a ready writer."

The following paragraph appeared in the Pittsburgh *Daily Dispatch*, in March, 1848:—"Lieutenant Mayne Reid, whose death was reported some time since, is about to be married to Signorina Guadaloupe Rozas, a beautiful lady, daughter of Senator

Rozas, and said to be the wealthiest heiress in the Valley of Mexico. He formerly resided here, and was known as the 'Poor Scholar.'"

This report was untrue. Mayne Reid had not yet "met his fate."

He was equally distinguished in love and in war, and by some fair *Mexicaines* was entitled the "*Don Juan de Tenorio.*"

An American journal describes the gallant Captain as a "*mixture of Adonis and the Apollo Belvidere, with a dash of the Centaur!*"

He possessed a faultless figure, and the grace of his manner was very captivating.

It was one of Mayne Reid's duties in Mexico to protect the inmates of a convent, and the nuns frequently sent him little delicacies in the shape of sweetmeats, made by their own fair hands, with his

initials in comfits on the top. In a letter he wrote:

"During the campaign in which I had taken part, chance threw me into the company of monks of more than one order. Under the circumstances that gave me *entrée* of their convents, and an intimate acquaintance with the brethren, even to joining them in their cups—these consisting of the best wines of Spain and her colonies, Xeres, Canario, Pedro Ximenes, with now and then a spice of Catalan brandy, opening the hearts and loosening the tongues of these cloistered gentry—I can speak to the character of the present monks of Mexico as Friar Gage spoke of their fraternity more than a century ago."

* * * * *

The following letter from Mayne Reid to

the *Ohio State Journal* in 1882, may be here fitly introduced:

"Sir,—My attention has been called to a letter which lately appeared in some American newspapers headed 'Mayne Reid's Mexican War Experiences,' in which certain statements are made gravely affecting my character and reputation. The writer says that in Pueblao, Mexico, 'Lieutenant Reid, while reproving one of the men of his company, became very much heated, and ran his sword through the man's body. The man died the same night.'

"Now, sir, it is quite true that I ran a soldier through with my sword, who soon after died of the wound. But it is absolutely untrue that there was any heat of temper on my part, or other incentive to act, save that of self-defence and the discharge of my duty as an officer. On the day of the occurrence

I was officer of the guard, and the man a prisoner in the guard prison—where, indeed, he spent most of his time—for he was a noted desperado, and, I may add, robber, long the pest and terror not only of his comrades in the regiment, but the poor Mexican people who suffered from his depredations, as all who were then there and are still living may remember. Having several times escaped from the guard-house prison, he had that day been recaptured, and I entered the cell to see to his being better secured. While the manacles were being placed upon his wrists—long-linked heavy irons—he clutched hold of them, and, rushing at me, aimed a blow at my head, which, but for my being too quick for him, would have been dealt me with serious if not fatal effect. He was a man of immense size and strength, and as all knew, regardless of consequences. He

had been often heard to boast that no officer dare put him in irons, and threaten those who in the line of their duty had to act towards him with severity. Still, when I thrust out, it was with no intention to kill, only to keep him off, and in point of fact, in his mad rush toward me he impaled himself on my sword.

"The writer of the letter goes on to say: 'Lieutenant Reid's grief was uncontrollable. The feeling against him, despite the fact that he had provocation for the act, was very strong in the regiment. . . If the regiment had not moved with the rest of the army toward Mexico the next day, Lieut. Reid would have been court-martialled, and might have been shot.'

"In answer to these serious allegations, not made in any malice, I believe, but from misinformation, I have only to say that I

was tried by court-martial, and instead of being sentenced to be shot, was ordered to resume command of my company for the forward march upon Mexico. And so far from the feeling being strong against me in the regiment, it was just the reverse, not only in the regiment, but throughout the whole army—the lamented Phil Kearney, commanding the dragoons, with many other officers of high rank, publicly declaring that for what I had done, instead of condemnation I deserved a vote of thanks. This because the army's discipline had become greatly relaxed during the long period of inaction that preceded our advance into the Valley of Mexico, and we had much trouble with the men—especially of the volunteer regiments. My act, involuntary and unintentional though it was, did something toward bringing them back to a sense of obedience

and duty. That I sorrowed for it is true, but not in the sense attributed to me by the newspaper correspondent. My grief was from the necessity that forced it upon me, and its lamentable result. It is some satisfaction to know that the unfortunate man himself held me blameless, and in his dying words, as I was told, said I had but done my duty. So I trust that this explanation will place the affair in a different light from that thrown upon it by the article alluded to."

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V.

In February, 1876, Mr. Henry Lee wrote to Captain Mayne Reid for some account of the Mexican axolotl, and received the following answer:

Chasewood, Ross, Herefordshire, February 28, 1876.

My dear Henry Lee,—You ask me to tell you what I know of that strange Protean—the *axolotl*. Such knowledge as I have is at your service.

First, as to its name; which is a word purely Aztecan. The Spaniards, adopting it, have made some change in the spelling without materially altering the pronunciation. Their form is *ajolóte*—the final syllable sounded, though with the accent on the penultimate. But, to one unacquainted with Spanish orthoëpy, it may be observed that the "j" is pronounced as an aspirated "h"—in short, as the Greek χ—and so also is "x" in the Aztec orthography. The final "tl" of the latter, common to many Aztec and Zapoteque words—as in *tepetl* (mountain), *metatl* (millstone), which the Indian lingeringly lets fall from the tip of his tongue—cannot well be symbolized by any exponent of vocal sound in our language. The Spaniards represent it indifferently by "te," sometimes with the addition of a "c," thus, *metate, Popocatepec.* The *ajolóte,* however, is without the added "c," and pronounced, as nearly as possible, *ah-ho-loát-e,* with emphasis on the "loat," and the terminating "e" barely distinguishable.

So much for the name of the reptile-fish. As to its nature, I fear I can add but little to the information already before the public; though, perhaps, something of its *habitat* that may be interesting. Your species, of the Brighton Aquarium,

dwells in the Laguna de Tezcoco—the largest of six lakes that lie in the Valley of Mexico. An ordinary map will indicate only five: Chalco, Xochimilco, Tezcoco, San Christobal, and Zumpango; and of these alone does Humboldt speak in his "Essai Politique." But there are in reality six—the sixth called Xaltocan. The two first-named are in the southern section of the valley—which, by the way, is not a *valley*, but a *plain*, with a periphery of mountains; an elevated plateau, slightly over 7,000 feet above the sea's level, the mountain rim around, composed of parallel and transverse *sierras* of the great Andean Cordillera, having several summits that rise from 8,000 to 10,000 feet higher, with two—Popocatepec and Ixticihuatl—that carry the eternal snow. Chalco and Xochimilco, as observed, occupying a southern position on this plain, are both fresh water lakes—if lakes they can be called, for at the present time their surface is concealed by a thick sedge of *tulares*—various species of aquatic plants—whose roots, entwined, form a floating coverture termed *cinta*, which is in places so close and tough as to permit depasturage by horses and horned cattle. Here and there only are spots of clear water of very limited extent, while the vast morass, miles upon miles, is traversed by three or four canals—in the language of the country, *acalotes*—partly natural, but for the most part hewn out of the sedge, and kept open by the passage of the Indian boats and canoes navigating them. It was upon sections of this *cinta* that the famed *chinampas*, or "Floating Gardens," were constructed, and not, as erroneously stated by Humboldt, and other writers following him, on rafts of timber and sticks. I may here interpolate a fact not generally, if at all, known to Europeans: that these *chinampas* (of which I hope some day to give an account) are in existence at the present time.

Several species of very small fish inhabit lakes Chalco and Xochimilco; indeed, the fish market of the Mexican capital is chiefly supplied from them. But I have never heard of the axolotl being taken, or observed in either; and

you surprise me by saying it has spawned in *fresh* water in the Brighton Aquarium. Tezcoco, from which I presume your Protean must have come, is altogether of a different character, being salt as brine itself—so much that a man bathing in it comes out with a scaly crust over his skin, while waterfowl are often caught upon it, unable to fly through their wings getting thus encrusted! No fish can live in it, for the few minnow-like species there observed are found only by the estuaries of influent fresh-water streams. Even vegetation struggles in vain against the blighting influence of its atmosphere, and around its shores are seen but the forms of plants belonging to species that grow in salitrose soil; these so stunted and sparse as rather to heighten the impression of sterility. Tezcoco is, in truth, a Dead Sea of the Western world. Not so small, neither, since its area may be estimated at a hundred square miles, more or less. Once it was much larger—at the time of the Conquest—this being the lake whose waters washed the walls of the ancient Tenochtitlan. At the present time its edge is, at least, a league from the suburbs of the modern city standing on the same site. At certain seasons, however, after a long spell of rain, but more from the effects of a strong east wind, the lake is brought nearer, by overflow of the adjacent plain, a phenomenon leading to the popular but erroneous idea that Tezcoco, like the ocean, has a tide. Once, too, if we are to credit Humboldt, this lake was much deeper than it is now. Writing of it in 1803, he states its depth then to have been from three to five French mètres. I think the great German traveller must have been misinformed, as there has been no silting up to account for its present shallowness. There is not a spot in Lake Tezcoco where a man, standing upright, would have his head under water. It is traversed by market boats of the bread-basket pattern, flat bottomed, and impelled by poling—just the same sort as Cortez found navigating it when he launched his brigantine on its eastern edge, which vessel was doubtless nothing more than a rude raft. The

periaguas, and other craft which now ply upon it, bringing produce from Tezcoco, and other lake shore towns to the capital city, are all of the punt species, none of them drawing over eighteen inches of water. Notwithstanding, they have to keep to well-known ways, where the lake is deepest, guiding their course by certain landmarks on the shore, passing a wooden cross, "La Cruz," planted near the centre, coming in sight of which the devout—or rather, I should say, superstitious—boatmen uncover, and offer up a prayer to "Al Virgen."

This grand shallow sheet, then, so saline that fish cannot live in it, and vegetation withers under its blighting breath, is the congenial dwelling-place of the axolotl, and, if I mistake not, its only one in the Valley of Mexico; at least I am not aware of its existence in the other three lakes lying northward, their waters salt, too, but at times so low as to be almost dried up, or showing only a residuum of mud, its surface an efflorescence, akin to soda, and resembling hoar frost, called "tequiqzuite."

Though in a sense the sole inhabitant of Tezcoco, the axolotl is not left to peaceful or undisputed possession of the lake. It has its enemies in the predatory aquatic birds—herons, cranes, and cormorants—while man is also among them. To the "Lake Indian" its capture is a matter of economic industry, its flesh being a saleable commodity in the market. It is not absolutely relished as an article of food, except by the Indians themselves; who, as is well known, will eat anything and everything that lives, moves, and has being, be it fish, fowl, reptile, or insect. This, from ancient usage, originally a thing of necessity, not choice, when the Aztec, surrounded by Tlascallan, with other warlike enemies, was confined to the islands of this inland sea, and from it compelled to draw part of his sustenance—to eat indifferently frogs, tadpoles, newts, and such repulsive reptiles; as also the eggs of a curious water-fly—the axavacatl (*Ahuatlea Mexicana*)—a sort of "caviar," still obtainable in the markets of the Mexican

capital. I have seen the axolotl of respectable dimensions—at least a foot in length, while specimens of fifteen and sixteen inches are occasionally exhibited. Fish or flesh, relished or not, it is often eaten by invalids, the Mexican *medicos* pronouncing it a specific for liver inflammation and pulmonary complaints, as we do cod-liver oil; while it is also supposed to be serviceable in cases of hectic fever, and as a food for children. A mucilaginous syrup, compounded of its gelatinous portions and certain medicinal herbs, is sold in the *boticas* of the apothecaries as a balsam for colds, coughs, and other bronchial maladies.

I refrain from touching on the zoological character of this creature, so strangely abnormal, as I could add nothing to what is already known to you. Besides, that is a question for the scientific naturalist, to whom I leave it. But it may not be generally known that, in addition to your Brighton Aquarium species—which is, I suppose, the *Siredon Humboldtii*, or *S. Harlanii*, of Laguna de Tezcoco—there is a new and quite distinct one recently discovered, inhabiting Lake Patzcuaro. This large sheet of water, lying centrally in the State of Michoacan—more than a hundred miles from the Mexican valley, in a direction nearly due west—has also its axolotl. Its discoverer has named it *Siredon Dumerilii*, after the accomplished French herpetologist; while its local vulgar name on the shores of Patzcuaro is "achoque de agua," or "water achoque," to distinguish it from a sort of land lizard called "achoque de tierra"—the *Bolitoglossa Mexicana* of Dumeril and Bibron, also common around the edges of the Michoacan Lake. The Patzcuaro species differs from yours of the Brighton Aquarium in several respects. In size it is somewhat the same; but its colour, instead of being blackish, or white, as in the Albino varieties of Humboldt's Siredon, is of a violet-red, slightly blemished with grey, the gills only being black, while the neck, throat, and breast are of a pale, whitish hue.

Without dwelling longer on this subject, I will venture

to say that when all of the great Mexican saline lakes—such as Chapa'a and Cuitzoc—are searched, there will be found other species of axolotl, distinct from any of those yet known to science. Mexico is a fine field for the scientific explorer; its paths hitherto but little trodden by the naturalist, because unsafe from being so much frequented by the "Knights of the Road," ycleped *salteadores*.

MAYNE REID.

CHAPTER VII.

WHO WAS FIRST INTO CHAPULTEPEC?

Captain Mayne Reid returned from Mexico to the United States in the spring of 1848.

He spent the autumn and winter at his friend Donn Piatt's house in the valley of the Mac-o-Chee, Ohio. Here he wrote the greater part of "The Rifle Rangers," in which he gives us pictures of his Mexican life, returning to New York in the spring of 1849. The question was then going the round of the newspapers, "Who was first into Chapultepec?"

The following is an extract from a letter written by Mayne Reid in reference to the storming of Chapultepec, and in which he inclosed some testimonies of his part in the affair:

"These documents were hastily collected in New York in the spring of 1849, when I heard of other individuals claiming to have been first into Chapultepec. I do not claim to have been first over the walls, as I did not get over the wall at all, but was shot down in front of it; but I claim to have led up the men who received the last volley of the enemy's fire, and thus left the scaling the wall a mere matter of climbing, as scarcely any one was shot afterwards.

"While collecting this testimony I was suddenly called upon to take the leadership of a legion organized in New York to assist the revolutionary struggle in Europe, and I sailed at the latter end of June, '49. Otherwise I could have obtained far more testimony than contained in these scant documents here.

"MAYNE REID.

"P.S.—General Pillow was at the time

using every exertion to disprove my claims, it being a life and death matter with him, having an eye to the Presidency, to prove that the men of his division were the first to enter Chapultepec."

The following testimony was given to Mayne Reid, and, as he says, "generously given, as only one of these officers was my personal friend, the others being almost unknown to me."

Testimony of Lieut. Cochrane, Second Regiment of Voltigeurs.

"On the morning of the 13th of September, 1847, the regiment of Voltigeurs, to which I was attached as subaltern officer, was ordered to clear the woods and the western side of the wall, extending from Molino del Rey to the Castle of Chapultepec, of the Mexican Infantry (light), and to halt at

the foot of the hill, in order to allow the storming party of Worth's division to scale the hill.

"We drove the Mexicans as ordered, but in so rapid a manner that, along with some of the infantry of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Ninth of Pillow's division, we kept driving the enemy under a heavy fire from the Castle, and a redan on the side of the hill, clear into their works—the storming party coming up rapidly.

"After driving them from the redan, I pushed for the south-western corner of the Castle with all the men about me, and scarcely ten yards from the wall, an officer of infantry, and either an officer or sergeant of artillery—judging from the stripe on his pants—were shot, and fell. They were the only two at the time that I saw in advance of me along the narrow path, the rock of which we were

scrambling. On collecting under the wall of the Castle there were some thirty or forty of us infantry and Voltigeurs at the extreme corner of the Castle, and several other officers were there at the same point. The main body had halted at the scarp of the hill, some forty yards from the wall, awaiting the arrival of the scaling ladders before making the final and decisive assault.

"I ordered two men of the Voltigeurs to go back a little way and assist the ladders up the hill. As they proceeded to do so they passed the point where the infantry officer above alluded to lay wounded, who, with evident pain, raised himself and sang out above the din and rattle of musketry:

"'For God's sake, men, don't leave that wall, or we shall all be cut to pieces. Hold on, and the Castle is ours!' or words to that effect.

"I immediately answered from the wall: 'There is no danger, Captain, of our leaving this. Never fear'—or words to that amount.

"Shortly after the ladders came—the rush was made and the Castle fell.

"In the course of a casual conversation about the events of that memorable morning, while in the city of Mexico, this incident was mentioned, and the officer who was wounded proved to be Lieut. Mayne Reid, of the New York Volunteers, who had been ordered to guard the battering guns upon the plain, and had joined the party in the assault on the Molino del Rey side of the Castle. I spoke freely of this matter, and was quite solicitous to become acquainted, while in Mexico, with the gallant and chivalric officer in question. This is a hasty and imperfect sketch of this transaction. I heard that Lieut. Reid had made a speech to the

men of all arms, which had induced them to ascend; but, as a party were fiercely engaged at the redan for a few seconds, I could not have heard his remarks above the din, as I was one of the redan party. It may be possible that the above speech is the one alluded to, though from what I heard said of it, he must have made other remarks at an earlier moment.

"Of course, I have not given the exact words, as some eighteen months have elapsed since that never-to-be-forgotten day, but I have given the *fact* and the substance of the words, which shows far more—the *fact*, I mean—credit and honour to his courage and his gallant conduct than the mere words could.

"Theo. D. Cochrane,

"Late Second Lieut. Regt. of Voltigeurs.

"Columbia, Pa., May 20, 1849."

"Cleveland, O., June, 1849.

"CAPT. MAYNE REID,

"DEAR SIR,—

"Very much surprised was I yesterday, when Mr. Grey, of the *Plain-dealer*, honoured me with a call, and communicated to me some lines of your letter to him, wherein it is stated that you had sent me about fourteen days ago a letter, with inclosure to Upman. I never have received your letter, and can obtain no information at the post office about it. Nevertheless will I testify to what I have seen of your military bravery and valour at Chapultepec—the only place where I have personally observed your gallant conduct.

"When our regiment—Fifteenth Infantry—had charged through the cypress trees on the foot of the Chapultepec Hill, and after our skirmishers had taken the first redan, and

chased the Mexicans out of it, I saw a young officer on my right hand side collecting about thirty or forty men of different corps, and encouraging the same with an address, which the roaring of the cannon and the musketry hindered me from understanding. Shortly after I saw the little band of heroes, with their brave leader in front, charge the right side battery, where a howitzer was posted; and they tried very hard to climb the mud walls, which were about twenty feet high. Soon after I perceived through the dense smoke, caused by the last discharge of the battery towards that small command, that the officer had scaled the wall and fell, what I then took for dead.

"All this was done in half the time I take to write it, and I was too much occupied with the command of my own detachment to enter into more particulars of that deciding moment.

My earnest admiration was paid to the dead hero; and onward we went to the left corner of the fortification. How we entered the Castle, and what great excitement prevailed in the first half-hour of that glorious victory, is too well known for further description. But one thing I must add, that my first inquiry after the abating of the excitement was, 'Who was that young officer leading the charge on our right?' and one of my men gave me the answer: 'It is a New Yorker by the name of Mayne Reid—a hell of a fellow.' That name I had heard several times before very favourably mentioned, without being personally acquainted with the man; and just as I was going to see if he was really dead, or wounded, Gen. Cadwallader addressed the troops from the window of the Castle, and gave orders to rally the different companies and be prepared for further orders. I had to stay with my

company, of course, and could not satisfy my great desire to ascertain the fate of that brave young man. One thing more I wish to say, namely, that this same brave conduct of yours helped on the left a great deal, because it turned the fire of the infantry in our front and gave us time to storm the walls the right moment.

"Yours most respectfully,

"CHARLES PETERNELL,

"Captain Fifteenth Infantry."

Donn Piatt received the following statement, made on affidavit by Lieut. Marshall, of the Fifteenth Infantry:

"I was in command of our company ordered to the attack of Chapultepec (Capt. King being indisposed), and had approached, under cover of trees and rocks, to the brow of the hill upon which the Castle stands,

where we halted to await the coming of the scaling ladders. At this point the fire from the Castle was so continuous and fatal that the men faltered, and several officers were wounded while urging them on. At this moment I noticed Lieut. Reid, of the New York Volunteers. I noticed him more particularly at the time on account of the very brilliant uniform he wore.

"He suddenly jumped to his feet, calling upon those around to follow, and without looking back to see whether he was sustained or not, pushed on almost alone to the very walls, where he fell badly wounded. All the officers who saw or knew of the act pronounced it, without exception, the bravest and most brilliant achievement performed by a single individual during the campaign; and at the time we determined, should occasion ever require it, to do him justice.

I am satisfied that his daring was the cause of our taking the Castle as we did. Nor was it an act of blind courage, but one of cool self-possession in the midst of imminent danger. Lieut. Reid had observed from the sound that the Castle was poorly supplied with side guns, and knew that could he once get his men to charge up to the walls they would be almost upon equal footing with the defenders. What makes this achievement more remarkable, Lieut. Reid was not ordered to attack, but volunteered."

He also received letters from Captain D. J. Sutherland, of the United States Marines, and Captain D. Upman, of the United States Infantry, to the same effect.

The chief honours of the assault on the Castle at Chapultepec were undoubtedly his.

CHAPTER VIII.

HE SEEKS TO AID THE REVOLUTIONARY AGITATIONS IN EUROPE.

About the middle of June, 1849, Captain Mayne Reid, in company with the revolutionary leader Hecker, and others bent upon the same errand, sailed in the Cunard steamship "Caledonia" for Liverpool, to aid the revolutionary movements then disturbing Europe.

The men composing the legion raised in New York, were to follow in another steamer.

On arrival at Liverpool, Captain Reid and Hecker received the intelligence, which had just arrived, that the Bavarian revolution was at an end. They were therefore to proceed direct for Hungary, so soon as their men

should arrive. Their plans had been to make for Baden first, and then on to Hungary.

Taking leave of his friend Hecker, Captain Mayne Reid appointed to join him in London in about a week or ten days. Mayne Reid then took the first boat leaving for Warren Point, to visit his native home before embarking on his perilous expedition. He landed in Ireland on the morning of July 12th, and at once took a car to Rathfriland, some twenty miles distant, reaching it about mid-day. Here he dispatched a messenger to Ballyroney to break the news of his return to his family, who were in ignorance of his having left America, fearing the shock that his sudden appearance might have upon his mother, for *la joie fait peur.*

The Captain quickly followed on the heels of his messenger. We leave the reader to imagine this reunion after so long an

absence. He had left home a mere youth. He returned a man who had passed through many fires, and bore their scars upon him.

There was a glad welcome for him in his native place, but the rejoicings were saddened with the reflection that he must so soon depart on the errand of war. All the neighbours vied each with the others in doing honour to the hero.

Captain Reid, amongst his luggage, had brought over from America a quantity of Colt's revolvers; the sight of these weapons caused no little consternation at Ballyroney.

The time agreed upon with Hecker expired, and Mayne Reid bade adieu to his home, and arrived in London at the beginning of August. He at once threw all his energies into the Hungarian cause.

Shortly after his arrival in London a public meeting was held at the Hanover

Square Rooms to advocate the recognition of Hungary as a nation. Mayne Reid was present, and the following is a report of his part in the proceedings:

"Colonel Reid, United States, moved the next resolution, and announced himself to be at the head of a band of bold Americans, who had arrived in this metropolis on their way to Hungary, to place their swords and lives at the disposal of her people. The resolution he moved was as follows: 'That the immediate recognition of the government *de facto* of the kingdom of Hungary by this country is no less demanded by considerations of justice and policy and the commercial interests of the two States, than with a view to putting a stop to the effusion of human blood, and of terminating the prospect of the fearful and bloody sepulchre of a soldier.' 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'let us hope that

this result may never be—let us pray that it may never be; and before I resume my seat I will offer a prayer to the God of Omnipotence, couched in a paraphrase upon the language of the eloquent Curran: May the Austrian and the Russian sink together in the dust; may the brave Magyar walk abroad in his own majesty; may his body swell beyond the measure of his chains, now bursting from around him; and may he stand redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation.'"

But Captain Mayne Reid was not destined to fight in the cause of Hungary, any more than in the Baden insurrection. Fate held different purposes for him to fulfil.

Before the expedition had started came the news of the defeat at Temsevar, on August 9th, 1849. Kossuth had been com-

pelled to abandon his position and flee into Turkey, and the subjugation of Hungary was soon after completed.

There was now no use for the legion, and Captain Reid helped them in returning to America.

To raise sufficient funds for this purpose he sold most of the Colt's revolvers he had brought over.

* * * * *

Captain Mayne Reid now finally sheathed his sword, once more took up the pen, and began those marvellous tales of adventure which have made his name famous.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS FIRST ROMANCES.

Captain Mayne Reid now sought to find a publisher for his first romance, "The Rifle Rangers," which he had written at Donn Piatt's house in Ohio, and to which he had now put the finishing touches in London.

To find a publisher for a book by an unknown author was no easy task. Eventually the work was published by William Shoberl, Great Marlborough Street, in two volumes, at one guinea, on an agreement to pay the author half the profits. The preface to "The Rifle Rangers" is as follows:

"The incidents are not fictitious, but allowance must be made for a poetic colouring

which fancy has doubtless imparted. The characters are taken from living originals, though most of them figure under fictitious names; they are portraits nevertheless."

The book was dedicated to his friend, Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart.

"The Rifle Rangers" became at once a success, and the reviews in the press were of the most flattering description. The *Observer*, April 7th, 1850, says:

"Two extraordinary volumes, teeming with varied Mexican adventures, and written by no everyday man. Of Captain Mayne Reid may be said, according to his own analysis of himself, what Byron wrote of Bonaparte:

'And quiet to quick bosoms is a hell!'

"The volumes contain some wild love passages, and many descriptions of manners and scenery."

Of this book a writer in an American

journal says: "In London he found a publisher, and awoke to a world-wide fame. The book that could not be published here, was translated and republished in every language in Europe, and returning to this country, found thousands of delighted readers. Your correspondent, calling once to pay his respects to Lamartine, found that gentleman with Mayne Reid's book in his hand, and the eminent Frenchman loud in its praise. Dumas, senior, said he could not close the book till he had read the last word."

This was followed by his second romance, the world-famed "Scalp Hunters," which was written by Mayne Reid in Ireland, at Ballyroney, in the old house in which he was born. On its completion he returned to London, and the book was published in 1851, by Charles Street, in three volumes.

It at once became one of the most popular books of the season, and has maintained its popularity ever since. Over a million copies have been sold in Great Britain alone, and it has been translated into as many languages as "The Pilgrim's Progress." The preface to "The Scalp Hunters" is dated June, 1851:

"My book is a *trapper* book. It is well known that trappers swear like troopers; some of them, in fact, worse. I have endeavoured to christianize my trappers as much as lay in my power. I, however, see a wide distinction between the impiety of a trapper's oath and the immorality of an unchaste episode."

There was not an adverse criticism in any of the press notices.

David Bogue, publisher, of Fleet Street, proposed to Mayne Reid to write a series

of boys' books of adventure, the books which earned for him the title of the "Boy's Novelist." The first of these was "The Desert Home," or "English Family Robinson." It was published by Bogue at Christmas, 1851, in an illustrated cloth edition at 7s. 6d. The *Globe*, February 2nd, 1852, says: "Captain Mayne Reid offers to the juvenile community a little book calculated to excite their surprise and to gratify their tastes for the trans-atlantic, and the wonderful. The dangers and incidents of life in the wilderness are depicted in vivid colours."

In addition to his literary work Captain Mayne Reid now established a Rifle Club. His military ardour was not quite quenched. The Belvidere Rifle Club was the title.

The preliminary conditions for obtaining recognition by the Crown were stated by

the Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex, to be that the numbers of a Volunteer Rifle Corps should exceed sixty, and that particulars of the names of the members, and of the mode of training in arms practised, should be supplied.

The Christmas of 1852 saw the production of "The Boy Hunters." "For the boy readers of England and America this book has been written, and to them it is dedicated; that it may interest them, so as to rival in their affections the top, the ball, and the kite—that it may impress them, so as to create a taste for that most refining study, the study of Nature—that it may benefit them, by begetting a fondness for books, the antidotes of ignorance, of idleness, and vice, has been the design, as it is the sincere wish, of their friend the author."

CHAPTER X.

KOSSUTH. "THE TIMES."

During the year 1852 a strong friendship had sprung up between Captain Mayne Reid and Louis Kossuth, the ex-governor of Hungary, who was at that time living in London. Captain Reid entered enthusiastically into the Hungarian cause and attended many public meetings on behalf of the refugees.

In February, 1853, when the ill-fated insurrection at Milan took place, Kossuth was anxious to join the insurgents as soon as possible.

Captain Reid proposed that Kossuth should travel across the Continent disguised

as his servant. A passport was actually got from the Foreign Office for this purpose, and bears date 24th February, 1853, "for the free passage of Captain Mayne Reid, British subject, travelling on the Continent with a man-servant, James Hawkins, British subject." All was in readiness for their departure, when a telegram in cipher was received by Kossuth that the rising had proved only an *émeute*.

Fortunately for Captain Reid, who was thus spared risking his life on the altar of friendship, as he was quite prepared to do. Capture in Austria would have been certain death for one, if not both of them.

He remained a staunch friend to Louis Kossuth during the latter's residence in England, ever ready to defend him with the pen, as he had been with the sword.

The *Times* of February 10th, 1853,

contained these lines at the head of its Notices to Correspondents: "At 2 o'clock this morning we received a letter, signed 'Mayne Reid,' denying, in absurdly bombastic language, the genuineness of the proclamation which we published on the 10th inst., and which we introduced as 'professing to be addressed by M. Kossuth to the Hungarian soldiers in Italy.' Such documents are seldom very formal, but we had good reason for believing it to be genuine, and shall certainly not discredit it without better authority than that of 'Mayne Reid.'"

The letter to which the *Times* refers—or rather a copy of it—was sent by its author to the *Sun*.

"Louis Kossuth and the Italians.

"The following note has been addressed to

ourselves by Captain Mayne Reid, inclosing, as will be seen, a somewhat remarkable communication addressed to one of our morning contemporaries. In our leading columns of this evening we have referred more directly to the very curious documents here subjoined:

"To the Editor of the *Sun*.

"30, Parkfield Street, Islington.

"Feb. 16th, 1853.

"SIR,—I regret that I am a stranger to you, but I have a confidence that your sense of 'fair play' will influence you to insert the accompanying letter in your journal of to-morrow. I need hardly add that the facts which it states have been drawn from an authentic source.

"With high respect, sir,

"I am, &c.,

"MAYNE REID.

"To the Editor of the *Times*.

"SIR,—In your journal of the 10th inst. appears a telegraphic dispatch announcing an insurrection in Milan; and underneath, in the same column, a document which you state 'purports to be from Kossuth,' and to which is appended the name of that gentleman.

"Now, sir, M. Kossuth either did write that document, or he did not. If he did, and you have published it without his authorization, you have committed, by all the laws of honour in this land, a dishonourable act. If he did not write it, you have committed, by the laws of justice in this land, a criminal act. I charge you with the committal of both. You are guilty of the latter; and the latter, like a parenthesis, embraces the former.

"You have published that document with-

out any authorization from the man whose name is subscribed to it; and upon the day following, in an additional article, you have declared its authenticity, as a proclamation addressed by M. Kossuth, from Bayswater, for the purpose of engaging the Lombard and Hungarian patriots in the late insurrection at Milan.

"As such, sir, in the name of M. Kossuth, *I disavow the document. I pronounce it to be a forgery.*

"It remains with M. Kossuth to bring you before the bar of the law. It has become my duty to arraign you before the tribunal of public opinion.

"I charge you, then, with having given utterance to a forged document, which was calculated to reflect with a damning influence upon the fame of its reputed author. Such conduct is in any case culpable. In yours it

is inexcusable, since you daily tell us that 'whatever is intended for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer.'

"But this is not all, sir. In the editorial referred to, you take occasion to speak of the man whose name has been thus abused in a tirade of vengeful invective, whose epithets I, as a gentleman, shall not condescend to reproduce.

"Calling the false proclamation 'bombastic fustian,' you have charged M. Kossuth with aiding to incite the late insurrection in Milan, and thereby causing the wanton shedding of blood—of 'hallooing on the wretched victims to certain destruction, while he himself enjoys the most perfect personal security under the guardianship of British law.'

"This is a serious charge, and, if not true, a slander which, by the mildest con-

struction, must be termed most cruel and atrocious. *It is not true.* It is a slander, and I feel confident that all who read will pronounce it, as I have done, cruel and atrocious.

"With regard to its first clause, I here affirm that M. Kossuth had not only no part in inciting the Italians to a revolution at this time; but, that up to the latest moment, he opposed such an ill-judged and premature movement with all the might of his counsel. He had weighty reasons for so doing. Perhaps you, sir, may know what these 'weighty reasons' are; but whether you do or not, I am not going to declare them for the benefit of Austrian ears. This is not the question now, but your charge is; to which I oppose the affirmation that it is *not true.* With regard to the latter clause of your quoted assertion, I have thus to answer: that the moment in which M.

Kossuth received the news of the insurrection in Milan—and which came upon him as unexpectedly as upon any man in England—upon that moment he hurried to make preparation for his departure to the scene of action. Although filled with a prophetic apprehension that the affair would turn out to be an *émeute*, and not a national revolution, he, nevertheless, resolved to fling his body into the struggle. I, who was to have had the honour of sharing his dangers, can bear testimony to the zeal with which he was hurrying to face them, when he was frustrated by the news that the insurrection was crushed. Were I to detail, as I may one day be called upon to do, the sacrifices which he made to effect that object, the slanders, sir, which you have uttered against him would recoil still more bitterly upon yourself. For the present I content myself with the assertion of the fact;

but should you render it necessary I am ready with the proofs.

"But no such explanation was needed to shield Louis Kossuth from your unmanly accusation. Shall I recall a circumstance in the life of that heroic man to refute you? You, sir, must know it well. It has been recorded in the columns, and engraven in the tablets, of history. In August, 1849, upon the banks of the Danube stood Louis Kossuth. On one side was the avenging Austrian, thirsting for his blood; on the other his weak and wavering protector, who had declared that unless he—Kossuth—and his associates would consent to abandon the religion of their fathers they must be yielded up, to what? On the part of Kossuth, to death—certain death—upon the ignominious scaffold. In this perilous crisis, others, less compromised, accepted life upon the terms

proposed. What did Kossuth, when it came to his turn to speak? He uttered these words of glory: 'Death, death upon the scaffold, in preference to such terms for life! Accursed be the tongue that could make to me such an infamous proposal.'

"In such language, at such a time, there is no 'bombastic fustian.' I could believe that there were men incapable of comprehending the sublime courage, the heroic virtue of such an act; but I did not believe there existed a man in all England who would have the effrontery—the positive and palpable meanness—to stigmatize the hero of that act with a charge of cowardice.

"Such, sir, are the facts connected with this affair. I may at some future time treat you to a few opinions, and review more copiously the history of your conduct in relation to M. Kossuth. Meanwhile, I leave

you to purify your soiled escutcheon as you best may.

"I am, sir, yours obediently,

"MAYNE REID.

"February 15th.

"P.S.—February 16th. SIR,—In your journal of this morning, instead of publishing the above letter, you have noticed it in a short paragraph, worthy of the pen that would malign a patriot. But do not imagine that you are to escape thus easily from the unpleasant position in which you have placed yourself. In this country the character of a gentleman, though he be a stranger, is not to be wantonly assailed with impunity, and you, sir, shall be as amenable to the laws of honour and justice as the meanest citizen in the land.

"You say, in relation to your pseudo proclamation, that you 'had good reason for believing it to be genuine, and shall certainly

not discredit it without better authority than that of 'Mayne Reid.'

"If you had no better authority for publishing it than what is implied by the tenor of the above paragraph, I fancy you will have some difficulty in explaining to your readers why you published it at all, and to your countrymen why—*so long as a doubt existed in your mind as to its genuineness*—you took advantage of the sentiments expressed by it to defame the character of its reputed author. You take occasion to characterize my letter as 'absurdly bombastic language.' It is before the public as above. Let them be the judges; and the only favour I should ask of them would be, to read your editorial article upon the same subject. Having given yours a prior perusal, I feel satisfied that their ears will not be so delicately attuned as to be jarred by the 'absurdly bombastic' of mine.

"'Bombastic' seems to be a favourite phrase with you, and for the style itself no writer in England is more accustomed to its usage than that mythical personage—the editor of the *Times*.

"Your sneer at the 'authority of Mayne Reid,' is equally characteristic. It is true I am but a plain gentleman, who make my living, like yourself, by literature. But I did not calculate upon the statement of a plain gentleman having any weight with you. In my letter I offered you full proof of my assertions. You do not seem inclined to call them forth.

"And now, sir, one word more. If you flatter yourself that by means of bold swagger and personal invective you can cover your misdeeds, you are sadly mistaken. You may insult the understanding of Englishmen, as you repeatedly do, with your wordy sophistry,

and mystify the masses, who 'run as they read.' I, sir, have a higher faith in the intelligence of my countrymen, and a full confidence that the majority of them have heads clear enough to understand, and hearts pure enough to repudiate, an unprovoked and unproven slander.

"I am, sir, &c.,

"MAYNE REID."

In the *Morning Advertiser* of February 19th, 1853, appeared the following:

"M. KOSSUTH AND 'THE TIMES.'

"To the Editor of the *Morning Advertiser*.

"SIR,—

"Your kindness in giving a place in your widely circulated journal to my former communication in relation to M.

Kossuth leads me to hope that you will also publish the inclosed document.

"I am, sir,

"With high respect,

"Truly yours,

"MAYNE REID.

"301, Parkfield Street, Feb. 17th."

"To the Editor of *The Times*.

"SIR,—

"You have refused to disavow the pseudo proclamation which you published over the name of M. Kossuth, '*without better authority than that of Mayne Reid*.' Perhaps you will be satisfied with the authority of the gentleman whose name is in autograph appended to the communication I now inclose you.

"I am, sir, &c.,

"MAYNE REID."

"To Captain Mayne Reid.

"London, Feb. 18, 1853.

"My Dear Sir,—

"I feel myself under high obligations for the generous and chivalric manner in which you stepped forth to do me justice, when you knew me to be wronged in that 'proclamation' matter; as also I feel bound to lasting gratitude towards you for the noble readiness with which you gave me at once your helping hand, at my request, to aid me to reach the field of that action which I did not approve, but which, of course, I must have been anxious to join.

"Your generous assistance, which you so readily granted me, I can the more appreciate, as I am sorry to say with us there are many difficulties, even in reaching any field of honourable danger at all. We are not free to move. Evidence of it: That

when not long ago my departed dear mother was on her death-bed in exile, a certain 'constitutional' government would allow me to go to imprint the parting kiss of filial devotion on her brow upon the condition only that I should submit to the disgraceful profanation of being accompanied by a 'gendarme' to my dying mother's bed.

"I thank you, sir, most affectionately, for that your assistance, as well as your chivalric defence. I was just about myself to publish a formal disavowal of that 'Proclamation to the Hungarian Soldiers.' I hope you, as well as every Englishman, will appreciate my motive for not having done it earlier.

"My motive, sir, was this: that my disavowal would, of course, have been telegraphed to Austrian quarters; and, supposing the fight in Italy still pending, might have possibly done some harm to my beloved

brethren in oppression, the Italians. So I took it to be my simple duty rather silently to submit to any virulent indignity than to harm the chances of the struggling patriots at Milan, who, though inconsiderately and at an ill-chosen moment, risked their life and blood and their sacred honour to free their country from insupportable oppression, and that a foreign one, too; just as England once rose and risked blood and life and sacred honour—nay, more, sent one king to the scaffold and one other into eternal exile—to free herself from oppression, though it was not a foreign one.

The history of past revolutions is but too readily forgotten by those who now reap their fruits in peace and happiness. But I would like to recall it to memory now, when men will be but too ready to add bitter blame to the misfortune of the vanquished.

"I certainly, sir, did highly disapprove of any idea of rising in Italy now; but the failure of the unfortunate victims I will consider but as a new claim upon my compassion and sympathy. Men, in the peaceful enjoyment of freedom and prosperity, can scarcely imagine what aspirations and what thoughts can and must cross the hearts of a people suffering what Italy does. That should be borne in mind before we cast the stone of blame upon those who fell.

"I, sir, am so much penetrated by this sentiment, that, were it not for higher motives —which are entirely of no personal susceptibility that I am not permitted to take upon myself the imputation of an imprudent act which I did not commit—I, perhaps, would have preferred to be injured by letting pass in silence the whole proclamation matter, and all the venomous slander connected with it.

"But for those higher motives I feel infinitely obliged to you for having so generously undertaken to vindicate my prudence, and my plain but honest character. May be that this, your chivalry, will entirely release me from the necessity of any further public steps in that respect. That I shall see, and leave in the meantime my ready disavowal where it is.

"However, as following the generous impulse of your heart, you may, perhaps, feel inclined to fight on the battle, if required, in which you so nobly engaged, I thought it would perhaps be as well to state to you some particulars.

"I think any intelligent reader of that purported proclamation may have at once become aware of its not being genuine on reading it. Because, to say in one and the same document something to this effect: 'I

send the bearer to you that he may inform me who amongst you are faithful and true, and inform me how you should organize;' and to say in the same document, as it were with the same breath: 'Rise! Strike! The moment is at hand,' which is as much as to say, 'Don't organize'—this is, indeed, too absurd a blunder in logic to be believed.

"Do I then disavow the sentiments contained in that document? No, sir; all my life is, and will be, summed up in this idea: my country's freedom—my country's rights; and consistently with this, I am, and will remain, an irreconcileable enemy to Francis Joseph of Austria, who stole by perjury from my country sacred rights, freedom, constitution, laws, and national existence; and beaten back in his criminal attack, robbed it by treason and by foreign force—and now murders it. Yes, sir, I avow openly these

my sentiments, and trust in God that the day of justice and retribution will soon come. And why should I not avow them? I am not bound to any allegiance to Francis Joseph of Austria. Not I; not my exiled countrymen; not our dear Hungary. He is no lawful sovereign of Hungary. Justice is at home in England, sir; and, therefore, I defy any man to get up a jury, or to point out a court in all England which would find a verdict for Francis Joseph being a lawful sovereign of Hungary—or I and my country owing him allegiance.

"Nor do I desire to be understood that I have never written anything like the contents of that apocryphal document. I, indeed, sir, never thought to have any claim to the reputation of a classical authorship. Bad as it is, sir, I have written worse things in my life. I may have written every

sentence of it; some of them at one time, some at another on different occasions—probably when I was a prisoner at Kutayah, for different exigencies, all past, long past, years ago, out of which writings the present document might have been patched up without my knowledge, and used on the present occasion without my consent.

"All this is not the question. The question, sir, is—have I addressed this (or whatsoever else) proclamation from English soil for the purpose of engaging the Hungarian soldiers, or whomsoever else, in the late insurrection at Milan, or wherever else, in Italy?

"That is the question. Answering to this question, you disavowed the document as such, and pronounced it to be a forgery—and you are perfectly right. I neither invited, nor gave any authority to any one

to invite, the Hungarian soldiers to join in any insurrection in Italy now. Nay, whenever I heard anything said about the Lombard patriots being incapable of enduring longer their oppression, and that perhaps they might feel inclined to break forth at any risk, I condemned the very idea of thinking now upon an insurrection in Italy, declaring that, for the present, no revolutionary movement would succeed in Lombardy, but 'would turn out to be but a deplorable *émeute*;' and I, for one, declared every *émeute*, however valiantly fought, would but render impure the well-founded, legitimate prospects of the cause of liberty.

"All this, sir, you have known, when you gave your chivalric *démenti* to that purported proclamation of mine. You have known more yet; you have seen a letter from one of the most renowned Italian

patriots, dated on the 10th of February, from the field of action, in which he categorically confesses that 'I in my views was perfectly right, and they have been wrong;' and in which he further, giving me the first notice of my name having been used 'clandestinely' at Milan, gives me himself full evidence that it was done without my knowledge, without my consent.

"You have known all this, sir; but one thing you may not yet know, and that is:

"I came to England about the end of June, 1852. Since that time I have been always on English soil; and since I have been on English soil, I never addressed any proclamation to the Hungarian soldiers in Italy.

"But stop. Yes, I have addressed a proclamation to them. A single one, dated February 15th, a copy of which I beg leave

to send to you; and remain with the highest regards and sincere gratitude,

"Dear sir,

"Yours affectionately and obediently,

"L. KOSSUTH.

"P.S.—You may make any public or private use of this my letter, and of the annexed proclamation, you may think proper. —KOSSUTH."

"TO THE HUNGARIAN SOLDIERS QUARTERED IN ITALY.

"Gallant Countrymen!—It is with indignation I learn that on the occasion of the troubles of February 6th, at Milan, an appeal has been circulated there in my name, calling on you to join in that abortive movement.

"Soldiers! that document was not genuine. I have not approved of an insurrection in

Italy for the present moment. I issued no appeal calling on you to take a part in it.

"Once the time will come—and come it shall, undoubtedly—when I, in the name of our country, will desire you, wheresoever you may then be, to side with the people around the banner of liberty. That is a sacred duty. Our enemy is the same everywhere, and the people's cause is one and the same; alike as there is but one God, one honour, and one liberty.

"But this one I shall do at the right time. The present time was not the right one.

"Of one thing you may rest assured, and that is, that I shall never play with your blood a wanton play.

"Whensoever I shall say to you, 'Ye braves, the time is at hand!' I will tell you

this neither from London, nor from any distant safe place, but from headquarters. In person will I lead you on, and claim the first share in your glorious dangers.

"Never shall I invite you to risk any danger in which I myself do not share.

"And as no one can be present in two places at once, should I, for that reason, not place myself at the head of your heroic ranks—because duty will call on me to do that in our own dear country, where I shall have to fight for freedom and right in Hungary, while you will be fighting for it in Italy—my appeal will reach you by the hand of a gallant Hungarian commander, whom I will charge to lead you on to the field of glory—fighting forward home to join the banner which I shall hold there.

"Of this you may rest assured. Until then be prepared—but wait. Don't play

your blood wantonly. The Fatherland, the world, is needing it.

"For freedom and Fatherland!

"L. KOSSUTH.

"London, Feb. 15, 1853."

The "forged proclamation" correspondence elicited numerous editorials from the Press, all warmly in praise of Captain Mayne Reid's able defence of Kossuth.

From the *Morning Advertiser* of February 19 the following is extracted:

"*The Times* — we say it with regret, because the character of the entire newspaper press is more or less affected by the misdeeds of one of its leading members— has earned for itself an unenviable notoriety by the frequency with which it gives circulation to calumnies against those to whom it is opposed, and then refusing to allow

the parties affected to prove that they are calumniated.

"A striking case, illustrative of this, has occurred within the last few days. *The Times*, by some means or other, becomes possessed of a document purporting to be a proclamation from Kossuth, addressed to the Hungarian soldiers in that portion of the Austrian army employed to put down the insurrection in Milan. We do not charge our contemporary with publishing this proclamation knowing it not to be genuine. We are willing to give *The Times* credit for believing in the perfect genuineness of the document when it opened its columns to its insertion. Nor do we blame that journal for inditing a leading article, in which the proclamation in question was made the groundwork of a furious onslaught on Kossuth, because we are still assuming that *The*

Times all this while believed the document to be an emanation from the pen of the illustrious Magyar.

"But farther than this, in our allowances for our contemporary, we cannot go. *The Times* is told that the proclamation to the Hungarian soldiers in the Austrian army was not the production of Kossuth's pen, and that he was in no wise responsible for its sentiments or its exhortations. Captain Mayne Reid writes to *The Times*, not only denying the genuineness of the document but producing facts and assigning reasons, which ought to have satisfied that journal that it had preferred a charge against Kossuth as groundless as it was injurious. But instead of giving a ready insertion to Captain Mayne Reid's vindication of the character of the Hungarian chief from the calumnies which *The Times* put into circulation, that

journal, without assigning, or being able to assign, any reason for still believing that the document was genuine, reiterates the assertion of its having proceeded from Kossuth's pen.

"Fortunately for the character of the English press, there is not another journal of any reputation in the country that would act in this matter as *The Times* has done. However much a paper may chance to be opposed to a particular individual, we know of no instance, with this solitary exception of *The Times*, in which an editor, having preferred a groundless charge against a man whose character is everything to him, would refuse to allow a contradiction and disproof of the accusation. The force of injustice could no further go. To act in this way is to play the part of a moral assassin, and ought to draw down on the head of the

journalist who could play so criminal a part the indignation and abhorrence of the public.

"*The Times* has not yet forgotten its old grudge against the Magyar chief, nor is it likely it ever will. It not only greatly damaged its commercial interests by the system of calumny which it pursued towards the Hungarian exile, but it had also to endure the mortification of finding that all its efforts to injure Kossuth's character, or to diminish the interest felt in the cause of Hungary, were entirely unsuccessful. Never was the utter powerlessness of a journal more thoroughly demonstrated than was that of *The Times* on the arrival of Kossuth in this country, and the mortification of its signal failure to prevent the tide of popular feeling from flowing in favour of the ex-governor of Hungary, still rankles in the

heart of *The Times*. The gross act of injustice which we have sought to expose, and which we have so unsparingly denounced, is the consequence of that intolerable mortification.

"The character of Kossuth needed not the able and unanswerable defences which Captain Mayne Reid, a popular author as well as gallant officer, published in the columns of this journal on Thursday. Least of all was it necessary to vindicate the Hungarian chief from the charge of want of courage. The entire conduct of Kossuth, during the most troublous and perilous period of the struggle for the national independence of his country, proved him to be a man possessed of courage, of heroism, and of a disregard of all considerations of personal safety, as his civil administration of the affairs of Hungary

showed him to be a statesman of consummate capacity.

"Afterwards came the other, and, in some respects, still nobler display of lofty heroism, which Kossuth made when a prisoner in Turkey. Those are indeed heartless calumniators who would seek to brand with the guilt of cowardice one of the bravest of men, overwhelmed with sorrow and an exile from his country—a country dearer to him than life itself. But for the credit of English journalism be it spoken, there is only one paper amidst the entire press of this country of which he can complain. We need not name that journal. Every one knows we allude to *The Times*—a journal whose name has for some time past been everywhere regarded as synonymous with all that is unprincipled and ungenerous.

"Since the above was in the printer's

hands, we have received another communication from Captain Mayne Reid, inclosing a letter from Kossuth himself, which completely settles the question of the forged proclamation. No one can read the letter of the illustrious Hungarian without blushing to think that he should be systematically assailed in the most savage manner, and be made the victim of a series of the grossest calumnies by a paper arrogating to itself the title of 'the leading journal of Europe.' Captain Mayne Reid deserves, and will receive, the thanks of every lover of justice for his spirited and triumphant defence of the character of Kossuth."

The Times afterwards stated that Kossuth was storing arms at Rotherhithe. In the issue of that journal on April 18th, 1853, appeared the following editorial note:

"We have received another highly complimentary letter from Mr. Mayne Reid—we mean a whole sheet full of abuse—and so long as we continue what we are, and Mr. Mayne Reid continues what he is, we shall consider his abuse the greatest praise it is in his power to bestow. A feeling of regard for the English language induces us, however, to refrain from giving publicity to Mr. Mayne Reid's balderdash, which we dare say may be read in another place."

A copy of this letter had been forwarded to the *Morning Advertiser*, and appeared in full in its columns on April 18th. It is as follows:

"To the Editor of *The Times*.

"Sir,—It is written—'Whom the gods would destroy, him they make mad.' Your doom then seems inevitable; for if an utter

abandonment of the laws of morality, a reckless disregard of the laws of honour, a desperate determination to court the contempt of your countrymen—if these be symptoms of madness, then are you mad indeed—mad as moon can make you.

"But the gods are guiltless of the act. The demons have done it. Your own vile passions have crazed you.

"Once more you have assailed M. Kossuth; once more you have shot your envenomed shaft; and once more, glancing back from the pure shield of that gentleman's honour, your poisoned arrow has recoiled upon yourself. Unscathed stands he. His escutcheon is unstained. Even your foul ink has not soiled it. It is pure as ever; spotless as the pinions of the swan, as the wing of the wave-washed albatross.

"You have created an abyss of infamy.

Into this you designed to drive M. Kossuth. You essayed to push him from the cliff. Headlong you rushed upon him; but, blinded by bad passions, you missed your aim. You have staggered over yourself; and your intended victim stands triumphantly above you.

"From the declarations of the gentleman himself, from my own personal knowledge of facts, I pronounce your whole statement regarding M. Kossuth and his Rotherhithe arsenal a web of wicked falsehoods. But the cold-blooded audacity, the harlotic *abandon*, with which you have uttered these falsehoods, and commented upon them, are positively astounding. It is difficult to believe you in earnest; and one is inclined to fancy you the dupe of some gross deception.

"But the palpable *animus* that guides your pen will not permit this charitable construction, and we are prevented from giving you

even the benefit of a doubt. We have no alternative but to believe you guilty, with deliberate forethought, with 'malice *prepense*.'

"But, sir, if you are to be suffered to drag innocent men from the privacy of their hearth to charge them with imaginary crimes—to support your charges with not a shadow of evidence, but, upon the contrary, to substitute coarse calumny and vengeful vituperation—if all this be permitted you with impunity, it is full time that we inquire, in what consists English freedom?

"There are other tyrannies besides that of despotic governments. There is the tyranny of a licentious press; and, for my part, I would rather submit me to the rule of the sabre and the knout, than live at the mercy of a conclave of dissipated adventurers who sneak around the purlieus of Printing House Square.

"I shall not condescend to repeat the slanders you have lately uttered. I am saved the necessity of refuting them. The pen and the tongue have already accomplished this. Higher names than mine have endorsed the refutation. In the House of Commons, Duncombe, Walmsley, Bright and Dudley Stuart, have nailed the lie to the wall.

"I know not what course M. Kossuth may pursue towards you. Doubtless he may treat you with that dignified silence he has hitherto observed. He can well afford it. He need not fear to be silent. He shall not lack defenders.

"You may double your staff of facile scribes, and arm each of them with a plume plucked from the fetid wing of the Austrian eagle. You will find among the champions of truth, brains as clear and

pens as clever as your own; and though you may stuff your columns with wordy sophistry, it will be scattered like chaff before the heaven-born wind.

"I repeat it, M. Kossuth can afford to treat you with sublime silence; but I, who am gifted neither with the divine endurance nor Christian forbearance of that noble man—I cannot help telling you the contempt I feel for you and yours. I feel the paucity of language to express it, and I doubt not but that every Englishman will experience a similar difficulty. True, we might get over that by borrowing a little from your vocabulary, but I shall not condescend to do so. Even now I feel that I am sinking the gentleman in coming thus forward a second time to call you to account.

"But as the citizen of a country by you

disgraced—as the friend of a man by you injured—I cannot submit myself to silence. When you charge M. Kossuth and other Hungarian leaders with a violation of our hospitality, I cannot do otherwise than pronounce your statements false. You perhaps do not know how much you yourself are indebted to the high respect which these gentlemen have for the laws of English hospitality. But for that, sir, I can assure you that you would long since have been dragged from your incognito, and treated in a manner I will not describe; and although I for one should not approve of such a proceeding, I could not deny that you have done all in your power to deserve it. But if the laws of our country protect you, they also protect the stranger from personal insult. The host has duties as well as the guest, and may equally

violate the laws of hospitality. You, sir, have been guilty of that violation.

"I call upon you, then, to make some atonement for the wrong you have done, to apologize to the man you have wronged, to your countrymen, whose honour you have compromised, whose intelligence you have insulted. I counsel you to this course, which you will find the most prudent. Do not affect to despise my counsel. Do not imagine, like Macbeth, that by 'becoming worse,' and keeping up a meretricious swagger, you may extricate yourself from your unhappy position. This, be assured, you can never do. Powerful as you fancy yourself, you are not strong enough to defy public opinion. You may flounce about the lobbies of a theatre—you may frown upon the manager, and frighten the trembling *débutante*—you may, now and then,

make merit for yourself by holding up to public execration some unfortunate wretch who, having miscalculated the amount of black-mail, has made you an *inadequate* offer; but fancy not, for all this, that you are omnipotent: you cannot annihilate one atom of truth. The humblest gentleman in England may condemn and defy you.

"Mayne Reid.

"14, Alpha Road, Regent's Park.

"April 16, 1853."

The language of this letter seems now somewhat inflated. Allowance must be made for the feelings of the writer, which, naturally sensitive, were then strongly stirred by his friendship for Kossuth and his enthusiasm for a popular cause.

A week later Kossuth wrote to Mayne Reid complaining of the espionage to which

he had been subjected during his residence in England, giving certain facts. The communication, along with a letter from his own pen, was forwarded by Captain Mayne Reid to the *Daily News*, in the columns of which it appeared, April 25th, 1853.

The following letters from Kossuth to Mayne Reid may be here conveniently inserted:

"28th March, 1856.

"My Dear Sir,—

"Here I am again to torment you eternally. I send you the second half of my second lecture for revision; the first half I am just a little cutting to the proper length, inasmuch as this second half, as you shall see, scarcely does admit of much abbreviation.

"How long *can* a lecture be?

"Yours affectionately,

"Kossuth.

"Captain Mayne Reid."

"Friday evening, June 6, 1856.

"My Dear Sir,—

"Sick, exhausted and outworn, I have had to prepare a new lecture for Glasgow, whither I travel next Monday.

"Hard work this lecturing, but they promise to be remunerative; and I have debts to pay, and my children want bread.

"I am greatly under obligation for your many kindnesses and assistance. I am not unmindful of my obligation, and I hope soon to testify it; but do me the favour once more to revise my grammar and syntax, I pray you.

"With the most sincere assurance of gratitude,

"Yours in truth and affection,

"Kossuth.

"Captain Mayne Reid."

"12, Regent's Park Terrace,

"March 4th, 1861.

"My Dear Friend,—

"Very sorry to hear of the illness of Madame Reid and of your own indisposition. Bronchitis—that curse of the London climate—is a very trying affair; we know only too much of it.

"Many, many thanks for your kind offer, which I gladly accept as far as your powerful pen is concerned. I am indeed in need of it, the more so as I have no time to write myself—have scarcely time to breathe.

"We must try and make this Chancery suit a glorious triumph to my country's rights and to the great principles involved in it, and I think we may if only the press is not allowed to relax its support.

"The papers—at least most of them—

are well disposed—even *The Times* (only think!).

"So write! write! write! is the word now more than ever.

"The *Daily News* will, I think, accept any good article on the subject—at least I expect them to do so—the *Morning Star* still more, and of the *Morning Advertiser* I feel perfectly sure.

"I shall try to see you in the course of to-morrow, if possible—if not, then after to-morrow for certainty.

"Yours very faithfully,

"KOSSUTH.

"Captain Mayne Reid."

In October, 1853, a meeting was held at the London Tavern, under the presidency of Lord Dudley Stuart, to express sympathy with Turkey. Captain Mayne Reid was

present, and spoke effectively against secret diplomacy.

"Secret diplomacy! There was not a phrase in the language that was more repugnant to the hearts and the ears of Englishmen. Secret diplomacy! There was dishonour in the sound—there was positive and palpable meanness in the thought.

"What has secret diplomacy done for England? Was it by secret diplomacy that this mighty nation had been built up? If they looked back upon their former history they would find that the tricksters of foreign countries had always out-tricked the tricksters of England. He could understand some mean and petty nation having resort to secret diplomacy; but he could not understand why England should have re-

course to it. Their first duty was to know what was right; and having ascertained that, to demand it in the most open and straightforward manner. He was no lover of war; he would be glad to see the sword turned into the plough share; but he believed the time had come when war was not only just, but a strict and holy necessity. They were bound by treaty to protect the integrity of Turkey. Throw interest to the winds, their honour called upon them."

A week later, on the 22nd of October, the British and French fleets entered the Bosphorus, determined to prevent the dismemberment of Turkey, although it was not until the following March that war was declared against Russia.

At Christmas 1853 "The Young Voy-

ageurs," a sequel to "The Boy Hunters," was published. The dedication was:

"Kind Father,
Gentle and Affectionate Mother,
Accept this tribute
of a Son's gratitude.
MAYNE REID."

Of this book the *Nonconformist* says:

"As a writer of books for boys, commend us above all men living to Captain Mayne Reid.

"We venture to add, that we should like to see *men* of any age who could deny that its perusal gave them both pleasure and instruction"

CHAPTER XI.

"THE CAPTAIN AND HIS CHILD WIFE."

CAPTAIN MAYNE REID had now met his fate; not in the dark-eyed Mexican senorita, but a fair little English girl, a child scarce thirteen years of age. Her name was Elizabeth Hyde, the only daughter of George William Hyde, a lineal descendant of the first Earl of Clarendon.

In his novel of "The Child Wife," he describes his first meeting this young girl: "In less than ten minutes after, he was in love with a child! There are those who will deem this an improbability. Nevertheless it was true; for we are recording an actual experience."

Later on he says to his friend Roseveldt:

"That child has impressed me with a

feeling I never had before. Her strange look has done it. I feel as if she had sounded the bottom of my soul! It may be fate, destiny, but as I live, Roseveldt, I have a presentiment she will yet be my wife!"

The courtship was in itself a romance. Elizabeth Hyde was living in London with Mrs. Hyde, the widow of her Uncle Clarendon, who brought her up after her mother's death. At Mrs. Hyde's house Captain Reid was one evening a guest. Afterwards he told his wife, "I fell in love with you that evening at first sight." The next morning her aunt said, "Captain Mayne Reid has quite fallen in love with you." Elizabeth answered, "You can tell him *I* have not fallen in love with him." A short time afterwards to the question of some one who had not seen the "lion," "What is Captain Reid like?" she replied, "Oh, he is a middle-aged

gentleman." This was repeated to Captain Reid, and he afterwards allowed that his vanity was much wounded at the time. A few weeks passed and the "middle-aged gentleman" was quite forgotten. Other matters occupied Elizabeth Hyde's thoughts. One day she was alone in the drawing-room making a doll's outfit. Captain Reid entered the room, but she did not recognize him. He looked surprised, and said, "Do you not remember me?" As he had a very foreign appearance, she exclaimed, "Oh, yes, you are Monsieur ——" Then he mentioned his name. He asked how old she was, and, on hearing, said, "You are getting old enough to have a lover, and you must have me."

The "middle-aged gentleman" did not, however, come up to her standard. Her uncle was her ideal.

After this Captain Reid made long and

frequent visits to the aunt's house, but saw the niece very little. With her, indeed, he found so little favour that she intentionally avoided his society. Mrs. Hyde began to believe herself the attraction, as Mayne Reid spent hours in her society. All is fair in love and war.

An old Quaker lady—a great friend, who was frequently at the house at the time of Mayne Reid's visits—was under the same impression, and at the first visit she paid after his marriage, said to Mayne Reid, in her quaint fashion, "Why, Mayne, I always thought thou wast after Eliza" (Mrs. Reid's aunt).

At last Elizabeth was beginning to feel some interest in her "lover." It was pity at first, as she had a notion he was a refugee, having lately heard his name in connection with the Hungarian refugees, though to her childish mind a refugee had no definite meaning. She thought, however, it was something to be sorry for.

One day Captain Reid brought her "The Scalp Hunters," asking her to read it, and saying she would find herself there. This book was written and published before the Captain saw her, but he said it was a foreshadowing, and that at first sight of her he had exclaimed to himself, "This is Zoë!"

Mrs. Hyde was now about to marry again —a clergyman—and to reside in a distant suburb of London. Just before her removal, Captain Mayne Reid called to say he was going on a visit to Paris, and to wish goodbye. Mrs. Hyde was not at home. He said to Elizabeth, "I shall not know where to find you when I return." But she did not enlighten him on the subject, little thinking how long it would be ere they met again.

After Mrs. Hyde's marriage, Elizabeth went to her father in the country. There did not seem any probability of Captain

Reid and herself ever meeting again, but she could not forget him for a single day during the interval which elapsed.

Two years after, in the winter of 1853, without the least knowledge that his Zoë was there, fate brought Captain Reid to the town at which she was then staying, where he had been invited to address a public meeting on behalf of the Polish Refugees.

Zoë was one of the audience at the Mechanics' Hall, where the meeting was held, accompanied by some friends.

The following is a quotation from a description which Mrs. Reid wrote down :—"An electric thrill seemed to pass through me as Captain Reid entered the room. Instantly, as though drawn by an invisible hand, and without a word to my friends, I left my seat and followed in the direction I saw him take. There was a platform at one end, occupied

by the speakers and a few ladies and gentlemen. He took his seat on the platform, and I mine also, just opposite to him. We did not speak, but our eyes met.

"At last it all came to an end—near midnight. The audience were fast dispersing in the body of the hall, the lights were being extinguished. The few who remained on the platform were hand-shaking and congratulating the speakers. Captain Reid had a number around him. I might also have joined them—we were then standing only a few feet apart—but something held me back.

"The place was now almost in darkness—all were leaving the platform. I caught a glimpse of my father hurrying towards me, and could just dimly see two or three gentlemen evidently waiting for the Captain, who was still conversing with one person.

"It seemed as though we were again about

to be severed. At that moment he came towards me, grasped my hand, and I just caught the hurried words:—'I leave for London by the next train. Send me your address.' Speech seemed to have left me, but it flashed upon me that I was in ignorance of *his*, and managed to stammer out:—'I do not know where.' He instantly handed me his card, and was gone.

"My father lifted me down from the platform and we groped our way out in the darkness.

"I then learned that Captain Mayne Reid had only arrived that evening, and was obliged to leave by the midnight train for London.

"On awaking the next morning, I immediately sprang out of bed to see if the card which I had left on my table the previous night was still there—or if it had not all been

a dream. But there was the card, with the name and address in full.

"It was not long after breakfast before I wrote and posted a formal little note:

"'DEAR CAPTAIN REID,—As you asked me last night to send you my address, I do so.'

"By return of post I received the following:

"'MY LITTLE ZOË,—Only say that you love me, and I will be with you at once.'

"My reply was:

"'I think I do love you.'

"On receipt of this the Captain put himself into an express train, quickly covering the hundred and fifty miles which separated us. My lover told me that when we parted in London he had feared that it was impossible to make me love him, but he could never forget me, and, in spite of all obstacles, had the firm conviction I should yet be his.

"My father rather reluctantly gave his consent to our marriage, the date of which was then fixed.

"I remember telling my father that I should be obliged to marry Captain Reid, despite his objection. But his disposition was the most gentle and confiding.

"The last letter from my *fiancé* contains the following:

"I shall soon now call you my own, and gaze again into those beautiful eyes. Your love falls on my heart like dew on the withered leaf. I am getting old, and *blasé*, and fear that your love for me is only a romance, which cannot last when you know me better. Do you think you can love me in my dressing-gown and slippers?

"The word *blasé* puzzled me very much. It was not then in my vocabulary."

Her aunt was greatly astonished at hearing the news of the marriage, as she was daily expecting her niece's arrival *en route* for school.

The child had gone to school of a different kind to educate herself in the real experiences of life.

After Captain Reid's marriage many amusing incidents occurred in relation to his "Child Wife." One day Captain Reid, accompanied by his little lady, was choosing a bonnet for her at a fashionable milliner's in Regent Street.

The milliner had addressed Mrs. Reid several times as "Miss." At last the Captain exclaimed rather sharply:

"This lady is my wife!"

The milliner, looking very much astonished, said: "I beg your pardon, sir, I thought the young lady was about returning to

school, and that you were choosing a bonnet for her to take."

Two years later, when they were residing in the country, Mrs. Reid was one day in the baker's shop in the village ordering amongst other things some biscuits. Whilst the old man was weighing them out, he offered some to Mrs. Reid. She thought this rather odd, but not liking to appear offended took a biscuit. The baker inquired, "How is Captain and Mrs. Reid, miss?" Mrs. Mayne Reid was much surprised as well as amused at this question, thinking of course the baker must know her, as she and Captain Reid had often been in the shop. She answered: "Captain Reid is quite well, and *I* am Mrs. Reid."

The old man's face was a study for an artist; he nearly fell back behind his counter, exclaiming: "I humbly beg your

pardon, ma'am. I thought you was the young lady visiting at the house during the holidays." The Captain's wife being still taken for a school-girl, it was necessary for her to assume an extra amount of dignity.

It appeared they had fancied that Mrs. Mayne Reid was an elderly invalid lady, who did not go out much.

About this time Mrs. Reid's father was on a visit to them, and used to accompany his daughter on horse-back nearly every day. He looked so young that the servants were asked: "Who is that young gentleman who is always riding out with Mrs. Reid?"

They got things considerably mixed, taking the husband for the father, and the father for something else, the latter being much the younger looking of the two, though of about the same age.

A short time previous to Captain Mayne Reid's death, he and Mrs. Reid were spending an evening at a friend's house, and the late John Oxenford was one of the guests. Just as they were taking their departure, Mr. Oxenford said to Mrs. Reid: "I have had a very pleasant surprise in meeting your father again; he is as entertaining as ever." Mrs. Reid was rather puzzled, since her father had been dead some years, until the hostess explained: "This is Captain Mayne Reid's wife, not his daughter."

At which there was a general laugh all round.

These funny incidents were constantly occurring. Sometimes Mrs. Reid would be supposed to be in no way related to Captain Reid, and would hear all kinds of remarks and comments passed upon the gallant

Captain-author, which she would afterwards relate for his amusement.

Captain Reid used to say he could not have endured having an old wife. On one occasion, when attending a large public *soirée*, a somewhat elderly dame of his acquaintance attached herself to him, and promenaded the room by his side for a great part of the evening. Mrs. Reid wondered what was making her husband look so savage. He came across the room to her saying: "I want you to keep close by me for the rest of the evening, or people will be taking that old thing for my wife!"

He was proud of his wife, and liked to have her remain his "Child Wife" to the end of the chapter.

"The Hunter's Feast" and "The Forest Exiles" were now written, the latter being his next boys' book for Christmas 1854.

"The Bush Boys," published in 1855, was the first of Captain Mayne Reid's South African books for boys. It was dedicated "To three very dear young friends, Franz, Louis and Vilma; the children of a still older friend, the friend of freedom, of virtue, and of truth — Louis Kossuth, by their sincere well-wisher, Mayne Reid."

Captain Reid had commenced "The Quadroon" some time before, and laid the MSS. away in his desk. It was finally published in three volumes, 1856, and was a very popular book. It was dramatized shortly after its first appearance, and performed at the City of London Theatre. Some years later, when a controversy arose as to the source of Mr. Boucicault's drama of "The Octoroon," Mayne Reid sent the following letter to the *Athenæum*, on December 14th, 1861:

"During a residence of many years—com-

mencing in 1839, and ending, with intervals of absence, in 1848—the author of 'The Quadroon' was an eye-witness of nearly a score of slave auctions, at which beautiful Quadroon girls were sold in bankruptcy, and bought up, too, notoriously with the motives that actuated the 'Gayarre' of his tale; and upon such actual incidents was the story of 'The Quadroon' founded. Most of the book was written in 1852; but, as truthfully stated in its preface, in consequence of the appearance of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' its publication was postponed until 1856. The writing of it was finished early in 1855.

"With regard to 'The Quadroon' and the Adelphi drama, the resemblance is just that which must ever exist between a melo-drama and the romance from which it is taken; and when 'The Octoroon' was first

produced in New York—January, 1860—its scenes and characters were at once identified by the newspaper critics of that city as being transcripts from the pages of 'The Quadroon.' Some of its scenes as at present performed are original—at least, they are not from 'The Quadroon'—but these introduced incidents are generally believed not to have improved the story; and one of them—the poisoning of the heroine—Mr. Boucicault has had the good taste to alter, restoring the beautiful Quadroon to the happier destiny to which the romance had consigned her. It might be equally in good taste if the clever dramatist were to come out before the public with a frank avowal of the source whence his drama has been drawn."

Soon after his marriage Captain Mayne Reid took up his abode in Buckinghamshire,

at Gerrards Cross, about 20 miles from London. The greater number of his works were written in this rural retreat.

"The Young Yägers," a sequel to "The Bush Boys," was his Christmas book for 1856, and on the 3rd of January, 1857, the first chapter of his novel, "The War Trail," appeared in *Chambers' Journal.* Messrs. Chambers paid three hundred guineas for the right of issue in their journal, and the following year they published "Oceola" in the same manner, with an advance in price. The scene of this novel is laid in Florida, and deals with the Seminole war.

During the year 1858, Captain Mayne Reid wrote "The Plant Hunters," also his first essay at a sea book of adventure for boys, "Ran Away to Sea." It was followed in 1859 by "The Boy Tar," published by Messrs. Routledge, and in 1860 he wrote for that

firm "Odd People," a popular description of singular races of men.

"The White Chief," published in 1859, was his next novel.

In 1860 "The Wild Huntress" first appeared in *Chambers' Journal.*

In 1861 Messrs. Routledge. published "Bruin, or the Great Bear Hunt," also a book of "Zoology for Boys: Quadrupeds, what they are and where found."

Captain Reid dramatized "The Wild Huntress" himself.

In 1861-62, "The Wood Rangers" and "The Tiger Hunter, or a Hero in Spite of Himself," adapted from the French of Louis de Bellemare, were published; and in 1862, the first part of "The Maroon" appeared in *Cassell's Family Paper.* It was afterwards issued in three volumes by Hurst and Blackett, of Marlborough Street. Mayne Reid

dramatized this story himself, and the play was performed at one of the East End London theatres.

In the autumn of 1863, Mayne Reid published a "Treatise on Croquet." He was an enthusiast of the game, had made a study of the rules, and spent many a happy hour in sending his enemy to "Hong-Kong." Calling one day at a friend's house he picked up a little book called "The Rules of Croquet," by an "Old Hand;" on examination this proved to be a copy of his own book. It was sent out in boxes of croquet, of what was known as the "Cassiobury" set, and Lord Essex was responsible for its publication. Mayne Reid demanded an explanation and withdrawal of the work. This being refused him, he advised his solicitor, the result being a Chancery suit against Lord Essex, which

was eventually compromised by the payment of £125, as well as all costs of the suit, the withdrawal of the book and the destruction of all copies.

Towards the end of 1862 a singular being presented himself at Captain Reid's town house. He was attired in a rough blanket, with his head passed through a hole in the middle of it—a sort of "poncho"—and carried a brown paper parcel under his arm. Mayne Reid listened to his story, which was to the effect that he had lately landed from Australia, that he had travelled round the earth more than six times and had lived with cannibals.

Captain Mayne Reid invited the "cannibal" to stay and eat, as it was just luncheon-time. Mrs. Reid listened to his wonderful tales with horror. The cannibal remarked, "I scarcely know how to use a knife and

fork, having been away so long from civili zation."

During the repast, Captain Reid had to leave the table to see some one in his study, and Mrs. Reid quickly made an excuse for going too, fearing she might be eaten!

The parcel contained a story he had written. He had tried to get an audience of some publishers in London, but they would not look at him. His name was Charles Beach, otherwise "Cannibal Charlie." Mayne Reid told him to leave his manuscript, and he would look at it, at the same time giving the man a sum of money and telling him to get himself a "rig-out," as no doubt his appearance being so outlandish prejudiced those whom he called upon.

At the "cannibal's" next appearance, he was looking a little more civilized, and the manuscript in time, through the help of

Captain Mayne Reid, developed into a three volume novel, published in 1864, under the title of "Lost Lenore; or the Adventures of a Rolling Stone."

In the preface Mayne Reid scarcely takes sufficient credit to himself for the part he played; he had recast and nearly rewritten the whole work before it was placed in the publisher's hands. He says:

"A 'Rolling Stone' came tumbling across my track. There was a crystalline sparkle about it, proclaiming it no common pebble. I took it up, and submitted it to examination—it proved to be a diamond! A diamond of the 'first water,' slightly encrusted with quartz, needing but the chisel of the lapidary to lay bare its brilliant beauties to the gaze of an admiring world. Charles Beach is the proprietor of this precious gem; I, but the artizan intrusted with its

setting. If my share of the task has been attended with labour, it has been a 'labour of love,' for which I shall feel amply rewarded in listening to the congratulations which are due—and will certainly be given—to the lucky owner of the 'Rolling Stone,' the finder of 'Lost Lenore.'"

CHAPTER XII.

BRICKS AND MORTAR.

The next novel from his pen was "The White Gauntlett," an historical romance of the time of Charles I. Many of the scenes are laid in Buckinghamshire.

During the same year, 1863, "The Ocean Waifs" was appearing in the *Boys' Journal*, and the following year "The Boy Slaves" was written for the same magazine. After an interval of six years Captain Reid now satisfied his boy readers as to the fate of Karl and Caspar, the young "Plant Hunters," in the sequel called "The Cliff Climbers."

The *Boys' Journal*, 1865, contained his next boys' book, "Afloat in the Forest."

This year the wonderful tale of "The Headless Horseman" made its first appearance. There was a large coloured lithograph to be seen at all the railway stations and bookstalls of a handsome black horse, with a rider, in Mexican striped blanket, booted and spurred—all complete, but wanting a head! By many, this work is considered Mayne Reid's masterpiece. It is translated into Russian, and the circulation is stated to be the largest of any English author in Russia. Captain Mayne Reid is the most popular English novelist there.

In addition to his novels and books for boys, Mayne Reid is the author of numerous short stories and magazine sketches, most of which are published in collected form.

* * * * *

The author's many eccentricities were the theme of his rural neighbours' gossip.

During his residence at Gerrards Cross, the gallant Captain attended church more for the purpose of studying the bonnets than anything else. His inattention to the service, as also his dandyism in dress, were alike commented upon. One morning the post brought him the following, sent anonymously by a young lady:

"A friend who is deeply interested in Captain Mayne Reid's spiritual welfare forwards a prayer book, with the sincere wish that it may induce him to behave more reverently in church, and in reminding him that there is such a colour as lavender, hopes that the everlasting lemon kids may be varied!" This was accompanied by an infinitesimal prayer book, and a pair of lavender *cotton* gloves.

The vicar also presented him with a large church service; so the Captain's

spiritual welfare was well looked after just then.

One of the humbler members of the congregation, a labouring man, had also noticed the non use of a prayer book, and accosted the Captain one day, thus: "Ah, sir, I see you don't require no book; you be a scholard." The poor man evidently thinking that he knew it all by heart.

Between the years 1862 and 1865 Captain Mayne Reid built himself a house in the style of a Mexican hacienda, with flat roof. In front of the house he constructed an artificial pond—a circular basin lined with cement, a jet of water in the centre—probably to remind him of the alligator and the sisters Loupe, and Luz, to whom we are introduced in "The Rifle Rangers." He also built some model cottages and a reading room.

He made his own bricks, employing a regular staff of brick makers, and was his own architect. During the time of the building he would be up at six o'clock every morning to look after the workmen, and woe betide any who were the least negligent in their duty. The Captain's voice would be heard afar off, and one might fancy he was again storming Chapultepec, or that a troop of his wild Indians on the "war path" had suddenly invaded the quiet village.

This unfortunate mania for bricks and mortar, combined with other circumstances, ended disastrously, and Mayne Reid had to give up his country home, returning to London towards the end of 1866, to begin the world over again. His spirit was still undaunted, and in spite of failing health he succeeded, after many struggles

and disappointments, in re-establishing himself.

On Saturday, April 27th, 1867, there appeared in the streets of London the first number of a new penny evening journal, called *The Little Times*. It was an almost exact counterpart of *The Times* in miniature. In the first column was:

"BIRTHS.—On the 27th inst., at 275½, Strand, London, *The Times*, of a *Little Times*.

"MARRIAGES.—On the 6th inst., at Brussels, Philip Coburg to Mary Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. No cards.

"DEATHS.—On the 12th inst., at St. Stephen's, Westminster, Mr. Gladstone's amendment to the Reform Bill, deeply lamented by Lord Derby."

This paper was Captain Reid's first enterprise after his bankruptcy. The Publisher's advertisement was "*The Little Times* will

be published daily as soon as possible after the receipt of the morning mails and telegrams.

"Its latest edition will contain all the news received up to the dispatch of the evening mails for the country.

"Subscribers in the provinces will thus receive the latest London and Foreign Intelligence before it can reach them by the morning papers.

"About the political leaning of *The Little Times* nothing need here be said. Its spirit and proclivities will soon be discovered.

"It is scarcely necessary to point out to men of business the advantage of using *The Little Times* as an advertising medium.

"No quack or immoral advertisements will be admitted into its columns—the Publisher reserving to himself the right to decide as to their character.

"The terms for advertising will be One penny per word, and Twopence per word for the title in Capitals. No advertisement charged less than Two Shillings.

"It is hoped that *The Little Times* will be found in the shop of every newsvendor, and on the stalls of every railway station. If not, a note of requisition addressed to the Publisher will ensure not only an answer but a prompt supply."

It was a stupendous undertaking for him, as he not only edited and wrote the leaders, as well as the feuilletons of the paper, but did other literary work at the same time. We give the following "editorial" from his pen, under date of May 6, 1866:

"We are on the eve of an event that will startle, not only the people of this country, but Europe and the whole world.

"Our information comes from high and

indubitable authority; though we do not consider ourselves at liberty, at the present moment, to give details. The vagueness of our statement does not imply its unsubstantiality. All we will now venture to affirm is: that neither the mass of the English population, nor public opinion on the Continent, is prepared for the occurrence; and without indicating the party in the State taking the initiative, or the precise intent and plan of the action contemplated, we simply refer to it as having all the characteristics of a *coup d'état.*

"The action this day taken by the Ministry, in the matter of the Hyde Park demonstration, may assist in the interpretation of the event to which we allude."

———

"Our first word this day is for the working men of the metropolis; and we should

give it to them in the shape of advice, but that we know it would reach them too late. If damage is to be done, it will be begun before we get upon the scene, and our presence there would have no influence in staying it. If windows are to be smashed the stones will commence flying before three o'clock, and when stones are in the air no quiet peacemaker will be tolerated.

"But you are not going about your business in the right way. On the contrary, all wrong. *You have no right to assemble in the Park.*

"We do not speak of the Park as being private property, or belonging to the Crown. We deny such a doctrine *in toto*. Neither that Park, nor any other to which the Crown claims ownership by fossil fictions of old statutory law. It belongs to the nation, but no part or portion of the nation

has the right to use it for party purposes without the consent of the whole, and that consent should be obtained through the only authority that can legally grant it—the Legislative Government of the people. We know that this user is claimed by a thing which calls itself Government, in the shape of a Privy Council—not only claimed but enjoyed, without thought of illegality. We have militia trainings, fancy fairs, grand cavalcades of idleness and elegance, with roads cut to accommodate them. All this without asking either Parliament or people. But all this without asking is wrong—positively and legally wrong. If such privileges were asked, neither Parliament nor people would be slow to refuse them. Certainly not the Parliament, and as certainly not the English people, who have never been addicted to a dog-in-the-manger

policy when the sport of their aristocracy required permission. The sting lies in your not being consulted, and now the greater sting in being yourselves refused a share of the same privilege. Is this not the true explanation of your present ill-humour? We would risk a wager that it is.

"For all that you have no right to assemble in the Park, as you declare yourselves determined upon doing. . . ."

He was compelled to abandon *The Little Times* for want of funds, and also from his health breaking down under the strain of night and day work.

After resting awhile, Mayne Reid wrote "The Finger of Fate," the first part of which appeared in the *Boys' Own Magazine*, December, 1867.

"The Finger of Fate" has since earned a fame its author never anticipated for it,

his widow having to defend her rights (and that successfully) in the Chancery Division against an infringement of the copyright, and a leader in *The Times* was devoted to the subject. The book ends with a trial in favour of the plaintiff!

He had also a short tale, "The Fatal Cord," running in a periodical, the *Boys of England*, and had engaged to write "The Planter Pirate" for the same paper.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW YORK.

In October, 1867, Captain and Mrs. Mayne Reid went to the United States, arriving at Newport, Rhode Island, in November. Here they took a furnished cottage for the winter.

Soon after his arrival Captain Reid was eagerly sought by different publishers who wished to get his name. At Newport he wrote "The Child Wife," for which *Frank Leslie's Paper* paid him 8,000 dollars for the right of first appearance in its columns. "The Child Wife" was published by Ward, Lock and Tyler, in 3 vols., in 1868, and is now issued in one volume by Messrs. Sonnenschein

and Co. The proprietor of the *Fireside Companion* also paid 5,000 dollars to run "The Finger of Fate" in his paper. Mayne Reid had as much work for his pen as he could get through, and was now speculating upon bringing out a boys' magazine of his own in New York.

In December, 1868, the first number of *Onward*, Mayne Reid's magazine, appeared; he continued in the editorship for 14 months, doing other literary work in addition, till his health completely gave way, and the magazine was abandoned.

He was a constant sufferer from the effects of the wound in his leg, and during this brief sojourn in the United States was a patient in St. Luke's Hospital, New York, in 1870, suppuration of the thigh having brought him to death's door. From the hospital he writes:

"To the Editor of the *Sun*.

"Sir,---I have been for some days an inmate of St. Luke's Hospital, a sufferer from a severe and dangerous malady. To save my life calls for the highest surgical skill, along with combination of the most favourable circumstances, among them quiet. And yet during the whole of yesterday, and part of the day before (the Lord's Day), the air around me has been resonant with what, in the bitterness of my spirit, I pronounce a *feu d'enfer*. It has resembled an almost continuous fusillade of small arms, at intervals varied by a report like the bursting of a bombshell or the discharge of a cannon. I am told that this infernal fracas proceeds from a row of dwelling houses in front of this hospital, and that it is caused by the occupants of these dwellings or their children.

"Accustomed in early life to the roar of

artillery, my nerves are not easily excited by concussive sounds, and, therefore, I have not been seriously affected by them. But, alas! how different with scores of my fellow-sufferers in the hospital, beside the couch of many of whom death stands waiting for his victim. I am informed by my nurses, intelligent and experienced men, that they have known several cases where death has not only been hastened, but actually caused by the nervous startling and torture inflicted by these Fourth of July celebrations. I have been also informed that the venerable and philanthropic founder of this valuable institution has done all in his power to have this cruel infliction stayed, even by personal appeal to the inhabitants of the houses in question, and that he has been met by refusal, and the reply, 'We have a right to do as we please upon our own premises.' I

need not point out the utter falsity of this assured view of civic rights, but I would remark that the man, who, even under the sanction of long custom, and the pretence of country's love, permits his children, through mere wanton sport, to murder annually one or more of his fellow citizens, I say that such a man is not likely to make out of these children citizens who will be distinguished either for their patriotism or humanity.

"In the name of humanity I ask you, sir, to call public attention to this great cruelty, and, if possible, have it discontinued.

"Yours very truly,

"Mayne Reid.

"St. Luke's Hospital, July 5th, 1870."

He was interviewed in the hospital by a lady, who wrote the following account of her visit to Mayne Reid:

"New York, August 9, 1870.

"My sympathies were enlisted, too, for the brave fellow who has been languishing in St. Luke's Hospital. The sole tidings of him was the 4th of July remonstrance, which revealed how his spirit chafed at the seclusion and helplessness incomparably worse than physical pain.

"To find my way, then, to the hospital seemed a part of my pleasure in New York. The gate shut me in with a heavy clang, and I walked up the path to the main building with, I confess, no little trepidation at my boldness. In answer to the request 'to see Captain Mayne Reid,' I was conducted through a broad hall into a long ward furnished with an infinite number of low, narrow cots, that looked too small for any practical purpose. A turn through a short hall and what appeared to be an

apothecary's closet brought us to the private room of the author. He was lying upon a bedstead (similar to the ones in the ward) which was placed in the centre of the apartment. As he turned his head and raised himself upon his elbow to address me, he presented the view of a middle-aged, sturdy-looking English squire. The head is compact and covered by a profusion of dark brown hair, which, in contrast with the pallid complexion, stood out as if it had no part and parcel with the corpse-like whiteness of the scalp. The brow was smooth and fair, rounded out to gigantic proportions by ideality, causality and reverence. The nose, nervous and scornful, would have been remarkable but for the large and beautiful eyes, that are restless habitually, but when fixed upon an object have a lancellating effect, and withal an

expression of great good heart, that is seconded by one of the most winning smiles I ever beheld. Hands of uncommon grace and beauty somehow complete the charm of his lips and eyes.

"To speak first of matters of most interest to the public, Capt. Reid has been suffering from the effects of a gun-shot wound received in the Mexican war, culminating in an abscess which threatened to exhaust his vitality. Recovered from that by the care of one of the most experienced surgeons in America, he was attacked by dysentery, which at the time I saw him had reduced him to a critical condition again.

"'I may say truly,' he observed, 'that I was dead, and am alive. The doctors had given me up, and I felt myself there was no chance. I had the hiccough for hours, and the brandy and water administered gave me

no relief. With life slowly ebbing away, and the past and future passing in rapid review before my mind, an old recollection flashed before me in the strangest way, that draughts of pure brandy would sometimes arrest hiccoughs. I reached forth my hand for the bottle of brandy that stood on my stand and took a swallow. Instantly it went like fire through my veins, and with another draught my life was saved. I tell it to you for it may be of service to you some time.'

"As we talked, the air coming fresh through the open window, laden with the murmur of leaves and twitter of swallows, a light, even step was heard approaching, and a lady came forward, pausing on the threshold. Oh, but she was fair! with her golden hair caught up under an azure fanchon of satin, and falling in soft ripples

over her forehead. There was an expression of firmness in her calm blue eyes which gave character to the face of infantile shape and loveliness. From her face my eye wandered to her figure, struck with admiration at her graceful pose—an accomplishment few women possess. They dance and sometimes walk well, but they rarely know how to stand still. Her gown, I observed, was white, with an overdress or wrap of blue, admirably suited to her peculiar style of beauty.

"'My wife,' said the invalid, and as he explained that I called because I had read his books she smiled and extended her hand. The smile was like sunshine, and the clasp of her soft, cool hand a positive luxury. The clear and musical voice was in keeping with her beautiful self, and I loitered for a moment to gather a full impression of the scene."

A few days after this interview a serious relapse took place, and on August 10th, telegrams were sent to his friends: "Captain Mayne Reid is dying." Everything was prepared for his interment, and even an obituary notice was written.

His wife was allowed to stay at the hospital during the night, being told by the doctors that any minute might be her husband's last. He had been lying in an unconscious state for the past three days, all the signs of approaching dissolution being present. About 8 o'clock on the morning of the 11th he rallied considerably. The doctors and two of the lady nurses were around his bed, when he suddenly raised himself up, exclaiming in a strong voice: "Turn those she-Beelzebubs," pointing to the two ladies, "out of the room at once, preaching at a fellow, and telling him

he's going to die. I'm not going to die. Bring me a beef-steak!"

Every one was astounded, the poor chaplain being nearly frightened out of his wits. The beef-steak was speedily brought in, and the patient made a feint of eating a portion.

From that day the gallant Captain slowly progressed towards recovery, and on September 10th left St. Luke's Hospital and sailed for Liverpool in the middle of October, this being his last visit to the country in whose cause he had shed his blood and earned the laurels of war.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLOSING SCENES.

For some time after his return home Mayne Reid's health remained in a precarious state, and he suffered very much from depression. At one time it was almost feared that his mind would not recover its balance. That wonderful intellect was sadly clouded; the terrible ordeal he had passed through in New York had left its mark behind. But in the end, with careful nursing his illusions vanished, and he once more resumed the pen. After writing some short articles for "Cassell's Illustrated Travels," he revised "The Finger of Fate" and "Lone Ranche," which was published in two volumes by

Chapman and Hall. In May, 1872, Mayne Reid commenced writing a new story, "The Death Shot," for Mr. Ingram. It appeared in *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, and was a great success, speedily increasing the circulation of that paper. "The Death Shot" was also published by Beadle and Adams, of New York, in their *Saturday Journal.*

On returning from his autumn tour in South Wales, Captain Reid writes to his young friend, Charles Ollivant:

"I'm growing as fat as the claimant, and strong as a bull, but sorrowful as a 'gib cat.'"

He was then re-writing "The Lone Ranche," and making it a much longer book. It ran through the columns of *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, under the title of "Adela."

In a letter written in November, Mayne Reid says:

"I am now in the middle of a negotiation, that if successful will be of great service to me—perhaps give me a small income for life, and for my dear wife when I die. I am trying to re-purchase the copyrights of my novels."

It was successful, and in December, 1873, and the following June, 1874, he was enabled to re-purchase the copyrights of most of his works.

In the autumn of 1874, Chapman and Hall published "The Death Shot" in three volumes. It had recently been revised.

In the preface, dated Great Malvern, September, 1874, he says:

"The author has re-modelled—almost re-written it.

"It is the same story, but as he hopes and believes, better told."

During the summer of this year Captain

Reid commenced "The Flag of Distress," which was first published in *Chambers' Journal* in August, 1875. He received three hundred guineas for the right of issue in that journal. Of this book Dr. William Chambers wrote to Mayne Reid: "I think the plot excellent, and the character of 'Harry Blew' the finest you have drawn."

"The Flag of Distress" was afterwards published in three volumes by Tinsley, and it and "The Death Shot" are now issued in one volume, published by Swan Sonnenschein and Co.

He also contributed several articles to magazines and a short tale to *The Illustrated London News*.

In October, 1874, Mayne Reid was again laid low. This time an abscess attacked the knee of the wounded leg. Again reports of his death were circulated, and

once more arrangements made for his burial. For six months he was on his bed, and rose at last a cripple, never being able to walk again for the remainder of his life without the aid of crutches. In 1882 a small pension was granted him from the United States Government for Mexican war services. The claim was for an invalid pension, and this was afterwards increased, but only shortly before his death.

During the last few years of his life, Captain Mayne Reid may be said to have literally turned his sword into the "plough share." He resided then near Ross, Herefordshire, amid the picturesque Wye scenery, and occupied himself in farming. He reared a peculiar breed of sheep—a cross between a Mexican species and the Welsh mountain sheep—and succeeded at length in getting

a flock, all with the same peculiarities, namely, jet black bodies, snow-white faces and long white bushy tails. An account of these sheep appeared in the *Live Stock Journal*, 1880. They were called "Jacob's sheep," being "ringed and speckled."

The Captain used to say, jestingly, that he should go down to posterity as a breeder of sheep. Their mutton appeared on his table, and out of their wool he had cloth woven, from which he wore garments made to his own design.

He was also a large potato grower, experimenting with Mexican seed. Some clever articles upon potato culture from his pen were contributed to the *Live Stock Journal*, 1880.

In his Herefordshire home he wrote "Gwen Wynn: a Romance of the Wye."

Towards the end of 1880 Captain Mayne

Reid revised "The Free Lances," in fact re-writing almost every line. The book had been originally written while he was editing the *Onward Magazine* in New York, but was not then published. Mr. Bonner, the proprietor of the *New York Ledger*, paid a large sum for running it through his paper.

This revising, in addition to other literary work, was rather hard upon Mayne Reid. He writes:

"I thought I would have broken down, but I seem to get better with the hard work, only I am in great fear my poor wife will give way. She is in very delicate health, and looking quite ill. That acts sadly against me in my work, for when she is not cheerful I don't write nearly so well."

His wife was his amanuensis. Captain

Mayne Reid regularly contributed a Christmas tale to the *Penny Illustrated Paper* and other journals during these latter days.

"The Free Lances" was published in three volumes, 1881, by Remington. The *Saturday Review*, July, 1881, says: "Captain Mayne Reid seems to be as lively a writer as he ever was, and if 'The Free Lances' causes any less thrill of excitement than was wont to be aroused by 'The Scalp Hunters,' the fault must be due to a change in the reader rather than in the author." "The Free Lances" is now published in one volume.

The last novel from Captain Mayne Reid's pen was "No Quarter," an historical tale of the Parliamentary wars. Most of the scenes are laid in Herefordshire and the Forest of Dean, all of which Mayne Reid

personally visited before writing the story. The principal characters and scenes of the book are historically correct.

He also wrote for the *Sporting and Dramatic News* articles on "Our Home Natural History," and letters to the *New York Tribune* on the "Rural Life of England."

For Mr. Ingram's paper, the *Boys' Illustrated News*, of which Captain Mayne Reid was co-editor on its first appearance, he wrote "The Lost Mountain" and "The Chase of Leviathan," also natural history notes and short stories.

"The Naturalist in Siluria," a popular book on natural history, was also written in Herefordshire.

Mr. W. H. Bates, author of "The Naturalist on the Amazon," in a letter to Mrs. Reid, says :

"Throughout our mutual acquaintance Captain Mayne Reid always impressed me as a man deeply interested in all natural history lore, and the subject was one of our most constant topics of conversation. If circumstances in early life had turned his attention in that direction he would have made a reputation as a naturalist."

The last book for boys written by Captain Mayne Reid was "The Land of Fire," a short story of the South Seas; but ere its publication the hand that penned it was cold in death.

* * * * *

Captain Mayne Reid possessed great powers of oratory. He would speak for hours on a subject with untiring energy. The language from his tongue flowed facile as that from his pen, his favourite theme being politics. He would often astound his

hearers by the eloquence he expended upon his beloved theory — the superiority of Republican over Monarchial institutions. Occasionally he came across a Tory equally red-hot, and then the "fur would fly." But Captain Reid, by his great charm of manner, rarely gave offence, and was, as a rule, listened to with good nature on both sides. Often while in the height of a very hot discussion he would suddenly change the theme, dropping at once from the sublime to the ridiculous with such ease that it was difficult for his audience to tell if he had really been in earnest. Had Mayne Reid chosen, he would have made a name as an orator. The few occasions on which he occupied the platform amply proved this.

Though cherishing the strongest Republican principles, Mayne Reid was by no means a leveller, but in many things the

very opposite to what the expression of his opinions would lead one to suppose. He was an enigma, which only one in the close contact of everyday life with him could solve.

His name rarely figured at literary gatherings, but he sometimes attended the Geographical or Zoological Societies' meetings; in fact, he avoided rather than sought literary society.

Before commencing a new book, Captain Mayne Reid would thoroughly study his subject and work out the plot. He would make rough drafts at first, which were afterwards thrown away.

He had no skill with the pencil, but would make curious figures like hieroglyphics in his manuscript, intended to represent objects described, but bearing to all but himself a merely imaginary resemblance.

His mode of writing was peculiar. He

rarely sat at a table, but reclined on a couch, arrayed in dressing-gown and slippers, with a portable desk and fur robe thrown across his knees even in hot weather, and a cigar between his lips—which was constantly going out and being re-lighted—while the floor all around him was strewed with matches. Latterly, after he became a cripple, the dressing-gown was discarded for a large Norfolk jacket, made from his own sheep's wool; and he would sit and write at the window in a large arm-chair with an improvised table in front of him resting on his knees, upon which at night he would have a couple of candles placed, the inevitable cigar, matches, and whisky toddy being the accessories.

He had a singular habit of reading in bed, with newspapers, manuscript, and a lighted candle on his pillow. At least a

score or more of times he has been found in the morning with the paper burnt to black tinder all round him, but neither himself nor the bed-clothes in the slightest singed.

The Mexican hero was never an idle man; and after his sword was sheathed in its scabbard, his pen never rested. His brain was as active as ever till within a fortnight of his death.

On October 22nd, 1883, Mayne Reid had fought his last battle.

* * * * *

An irregular block of white marble, on which is carved a sword and pen crossing each other, and these words from "The Scalp Hunters:"

> This is the weed prairie,
> It is misnamed,
> It is the Garden of God,

marks his last resting-place, in Kensal Green Cemetery, London.

CHAPTER XV.

DONN PIATT'S REMINISCENCE. PRESS NOTICES.

In this chapter are given a reminiscence by Donn Piatt of Mayne Reid, and a few extracts from the numerous obituary notices which appeared in the press. Donn Piatt writes:

"Mayne Reid wrote his first romance at my house, in this valley, where he spent a winter. He had come out of the Mexican war decorated with an ugly wound, and covered with glory as the bravest of the brave, in our little army under Scott.

"When not making love to the fair girls of the Mac-o-chee, or dashing over the country on my mare, he was writing a

romance,* with the scene in Mexico and on our Mexican border.

"He would read chapters to us of an evening (he was a fine reader), and if the commendation did not come up to his self-appreciation he would go to bed in a huff, and not touching pen to paper for days would make my mare suffer in his wild rides. I found that to save bay Jenny I must praise his work, and he came to regard me in time as Byron did Gifford. When told that ugly critic had pronounced 'me lord' the greatest of living poets, he said that he was 'a damned discriminating fellow.'

"That romance proved a great success. Again, like Byron, he put his well-worn gown, one morning, about one wakened to fame and fortune.

"The first remittance took the restless

* The romance alluded to was "The Rifle Rangers."

soldier of fortune from us, never to return. He would not have been content to remain as long as he did, but for the fact that he was desperately in love with a fair inmate of our house. But in her big blue eyes the gallant Irishman did not find favour, and he at last gave up the pursuit.

"From the station where he awaited his train he wrote us two letters. One of these I never saw. The other contained the following lines, which, without possessing any remarkable poetic merit, gracefully put on record his kind feelings on parting from the house he had made his home for nearly a year.

MAC-O-CHEE ADIEU.

Fade from my sight the valley sweet,
The brown, old, mossy mill,
The willows, where the wild birds keep
Song watch beside the rill;

The cottage, with its rustic porch,
Where the latest flower blooms,
And autumn, with her flaming torch,
The dying year illumes.

Within mine ears the sad farewell
In music lingers yet,
And casts upon my soul a spell
That bids it not forget;
Forget, dear friends, I never may,
While yet there lives a strain,
A flower, a thought, a favoured lay
To call you back again.

When evening comes you fondly meet
About the firelit hearth,
And hours fly by on wingèd feet,
In music and in mirth;
Ah! give a thought to one whose fate
On thorny pathway lies,
Who lingered fondly near the gate
That hid his paradise.

I hear, along the ringing rails,
My fate, that comes apace,
A moment more and strife prevails,
Where once were peace and rest;
Unrest begins, my furlough ends,
The world breaks on my view,
Ah! peaceful scene; ah! loving friends,
A sad and last adieu.

"Between that parting and our next encounter some twenty years intervened. Mayne Reid had made his fame and fortune,

throwing the last away upon a Mexican ranch in England, and I yet floating about on spars had just begun to use my pen as a means of support. He was grey, stout and rosy, living with his handsome little wife in rooms in Union Square. I told him that the old homestead upon the Mac-o-chee had fallen into decay, and of the little family circle he so fondly remembered I alone remained.

"That made him so sad that I proposed a bottle of wine to alleviate our sorrow, and he led the way to a subterranean excavation in Broadway, where we had not only the bottle, but a dinner and several bottles."

The following are short extracts from some public notices of his life:

In *The Times*, October 24th, 1883—

"Every schoolboy, and every one who has

ever been a schoolboy, will learn with sorrow of the death of Captain Mayne Reid. Who has forgotten those glorious rides across the Mexican prairies, when we galloped, mounted upon a mustang—a horse would have been too flat and unromantic—on the war trail, and surprised our enemy. The very titles of the books are enough to stir the blood. What a vista they open out of wild adventure, of mystery, of savage heroism!"

In *The Standard*—"It is an odd incident in the life of Captain Mayne Reid, that its active part ended suddenly, just when he might be supposed to think that it was seriously beginning. In 1849 he came to London, and began to pour forth that wonderful stream of romance, which never quite failed through thirty-four years, to the day of his death. Captain Mayne Reid

wrote for men and women, as well as boys; but there was not, we believe, a word in his books which a schoolboy could not read aloud to his mother and sisters."

In *The Daily News*—"An active man of adventurous temperament, he imparted his own animal spirits and his passion for the marvellous into the products of his busy brain. He was born with a zest for travel, which he contrived to indulge at a very early age. He explored American backwoods, hunted with Indians up the Red River, and roamed the boundless prairie on his own account. On behalf of the United States, in whose army he received a commission, he fought against Mexico. When his sword was in its sheath, and his fingers held the pen, he wrote with vigour and impetuosity as if under fire. Captain Mayne Reid gave by his books a great deal of

innocent pleasure, and they could always be admitted without scruple or inquiry into the best-regulated families."

And in *The Spectator*, October 27th, 1883—"As our judgment on Mayne Reid's novels is not that of our contemporaries, we are disinclined to allow his death to pass without a word of criticism. As an individual we knew nothing about him, except that in our judgment he missed his career, and would have made a first-class agent of the Geographical Society, to explore dangerous or excessively difficult regions, like Thibet, the Atlas Range, or the unknown hills and locked-up villages of Eastern Peru. He was a man of exceptional daring, having a positive liking for danger; he had the typographical eyes which should belong to a general; and he had a faculty of description, which he watered down for his

novels till it was hardly apparent. During the only interview which this writer ever had with him, accident induced his interlocutor to ask about the Pintos—the particoloured race sprung from native Mexicans and the cross breed between Indians and Negroes—who are stated to exist in the State of Mexico. The writer disbelieved in them, and expressed his belief, but Captain Mayne Reid, who declared he had seen specimens of the race, held him quite fascinated for half-an-hour by a description which, if imaginary, was a triumph of art, but which left on the hearer's mind an impression of absolute truth."

APPENDIX.

THE "LAND OF INNISFAIL."

By Mayne Reid.

And I must leave thee, Erin! 'tis my fate—
And I must wander over many a land!
And other climes and other homes await
The 'Scholar,' wasted—worn—but may this hand
That writes thy praises now, cold on the sand
Unburied lie for ever—may no hearth
Shelter me, vagrant on a foreign strand
The cursed and homeless outcast of the earth,
When I forget thou art the country of my birth.

Erin, I love thee! though thy sunken cheek
Is pale with weeping, and thy hollow eye,
With many a stifled groan, and rending shriek,
Reveals dark tales of bitter agony;
That I have pitied thy sad misery
I've proved through every change of land and sea;
I've wafted o'er the ocean many a sigh,
And many an earnest prayer that thou shouldst be,
As are thy children's souls—unshackled, happy, free!

I love thee, though I could not live with thee!
The trampler of thy fields, red with thy gore,
Had made my home a hell—I would not be
The fawning minion at a great man's door—
I would not beg upon thy wintry moor
To starve neglected; and soon as I knew
That there were other lands, the broad seas o'er,
With hands to welcome, and with hearts as true—
I dropped one tear, and bid my native land adieu!

A SOUTHERN SUNSET.

From "La Cubana," by Mayne Reid.

How gorgeously the golden sun declining
Gilds the soft sea whose tranquil waters span
Fair Cuba's Isle, the broad blue billow lining
With such bright tints as painter's pencil can
Project upon the naked canvas never!
In mellower beam his parting glances quiver,
Blending the hues of gold and red and azure,
And pouring on the wave his richest treasure.
From terraced roof above the noisy town,
The Spanish maiden watches him go down;
And mischief glistens in her dark brown eye:
For sunset brings the masking hour nigh.
Through loophole barred in yonder battlement,
Where grimly frowns El Moro's castled wall
There's many an eye in weary watching bent,
And many a sigh—alas! too idly spent—
By pinioned captive pining in his thrall.
The brilliant sheen upon the distant sea
Perchance may to his memory recall
Some happy thought of days when he was free;
Draw from his haggard eye the scalding tear—
The first that he has shed for many a year;
He breathes! he moves! alas, the clanking chain,
Soon checks the thought—he's in his cell again!
The sentry pacing on the 'brazured wall,
Lets to his feet the burnished carbine fall,
And looking down upon the busy bay,
Hums to himself some Andalusian lay;
Or, gazing on the banner floating gay,
Drawls out the loyal words, "*Viva el rey!*"
Along the shores that skirt this southern town,
A thousand dark eyes beam from faces brown—
'Tis they that joy to see the sun go down.

The muleteer, mounting, homeward turns his face,
And goads his laden mule to quicker pace;
The weary slave from out the field of cane,
A moment glances at the far free main,
And sighs as he bethinks him of his chain.
Short-lived and silent is his thought of pain,
For, stopping in his task while it is on,
He reads relief in yonder setting sun,
For, 'tis the herald of his labor done!
The poor *Bozal*, who knows not yet to pray,
Thinks of his wife and children far away,
In some rude kräal by Biafra's bay.
But where are they, that mild and gentle race,
Who worshipped him with prostrate form and face?
Where is the palm-screened hut of the cacique,
That once rose over yon barranca's brow?
Where are they all? Son of the island, speak!
Where the *bohio* stood, domes, turrets now
Alone along the hill-sides proudly gleam!
Ha! thou art sad and silent on the theme;
But in thy silence I can read their doom—
Name, nation, all, have passed into the tomb.
The tomb? No—no; they have not even one
To tell that they were once, and now are gone!

* * * * * * *

The fading light grows purple on the deep,
In gorgeous robes the god hath sunk to sleep;
So sets the sun o'er Cuba, with a smile—
The sweetest that he sheds upon this southern isle!

Mayne Reid did not admire a classical education. He wrote the following in May, 1881, and intended to publish it:

"The old adage 'knowledge is power' is more trite than true. Like many other proverbs long unquestioned in these modern days it often meets contradiction—indeed oftener than otherwise—ignorant men in every walk of life wielding an

influence denied to the most learned. Substitute the word 'wealth' for knowledge, or even craft of the lowest kind, and the proverb, alas! holds good.

"Nevertheless is there still some truth in it in its original form, dependent on the kind of knowledge, whether it be useful or merely ornamental. To the latter belong most of that taught at our universities and public schools—especially what are called the 'dead languages'—all but useless as regards the needs and realities of after life, and but of little value even for its adornments. Lore more valueless, and time worse spent than in acquiring it, are scarce possible to be conceived. It barely finds its parallel in the Chinese mnemonics. When one reflects on the hours spent on this study, days—with nights as well—weeks, months, and years, and then in after life looks back how little good he has got from it—unless, indeed, he be himself a school teacher or college professor to perpetuate the folly—his reflections cannot be of a satisfactory kind. What might he have done—what could he not have done—had he been instructed in science, instead of his mind made a storehouse of lumber, the cast-off clothing of nations who were never properly clad, with coffins containing their language dead as themselves?

"'But,' say the advocates of so-called classical education, 'what better way is there of training the youthful mind—giving it shape, scope, and direction—what other?' It seems hardly worth while to answer such a question; the wonder is that any one should ask it. Training the mind by the declination of 'hic hac hoc,' or that most absurd of all absurd excessing, scansion, is the veriest mockery of mental discipline. Science even in its humblest branches does infinitely better, and along with the lesson gives something as valuable as the training itself, or more so.

"'Ah! that may be true,' admit the admirers of defunct tongues, 'but then think of the soldiers, the statesmen, the poets, the heroes and notables of every speciality, who have lived, and whose deeds are alone recorded in the languages

called dead. Think of their customs and ways of life, their virtues and their vices, their gods and their devils, and how are you to get knowledge of them without acquaintance with their language?' Possibly better if we had never got knowledge of them, since their ways of life were not always such as they ought to be, while their vices and devils had a far more powerful influence over them than their virtues and gods.

"But admitting the knowledge worth attaining, it is the sheerest nonsense to say that it is not attainable without the study of their languages. The best classical scholar—and this in its truest sense—the writer ever came in contact with was a man who knew not even the letters of either Latin or Greek alphabet. There are no arcana there. Everything has been translated worth translating, and for the acquisition of classical knowledge a year spent in reading these translations is worth ten in the slow uncertain process of extracting it from the originals. To say that in translations the literature of the ancients is not obtainable in its purity, is, like many other sayings, either a falsehood or misconception. And often more, since all the translations are an actual improvement on the original."

THE END.

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